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VOL. XVII

RECORDS RELATING

TO THE

SOCIETY OF MERCHANT VENTURERS

OF THE

CITY OF BRISTOL

IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

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IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

SELECTED AND EDITED BY
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TO MY WIFE

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PREFACE

The period between the reorganization of the Society of Merchant Venturers in 1605 and the opening of the African trade in 1698 was of great importance in the history of the merchant community of Bristol. Although surprisingly little is known about Bristol trade in the sixteenth century, there are indications that the splendour of the later Middle Ages was not maintained. The seventeenth century, however, was a new age of expansion when, in spite of many difficulties, the merchants once again brought commercial greatness to Bristol. The ending of the monopoly of the Royal African Company was a fitting climax to a century of struggle.

This is the first of two volumes designed to illustrate the economic and social history of the merchant community of Bristol in the seventeenth century. The first volume has been devoted entirely to the organized merchant body—the Society of Merchant Venturers, and the extracts have been selected mainly from the Society's seventeenth-century records, which have not hitherto been considered as a whole and whose intrinsic interest entitles them to separate treatment. The second volume will deal with the merchants in their private capacities, and the documents will be selected mainly from those in the Bristol Record Office, the Public Record Office, the Probate Registries, the Bristol City Library, the College of Arms, and other national and local repositories.

I wish to express my gratitude in the first place to the Master, Wardens and Commonalty of the Society of Merchant Venturers of the City of Bristol, not only for their kindness in allowing me full access to their records, but also for a very generous grant towards the cost of publication. But for that generosity, it would have been necessary to reduce substantially the size of this book.

My sincere thanks are due to Miss G. E. Whitaker who freely placed at my disposal her great knowledge of the Society and whose enthusiasm and encouragement have been of the greatest help to me during the four years I have been working on the Society's records.

I am deeply indebted to Professor David Douglas who gave me the opportunity of preparing this volume for publication by the Bristol Record Society and whose advice and guidance have been invaluable ; to Professor C. M. MacInnes who has given me every encouragement in my work ; and to my colleagues Mr. J. W. Sherborne and Dr. C. D. Ross who have given me the benefit of their suggestions and criticisms.

Miss E. M. Carus-Wilson gave me much helpful advice concerning the thorny problems of early merchant organizations in Bristol, and Professor R. H. Tawney very kindly read the Introduction. Mr. Bernard Johnson generously placed at my disposal the results of some of his researches on the York Society of Merchant Adventurers.

I owe a debt of gratitude to Miss Elizabeth Ralph, Bristol City Archivist, for all the help she has given me in my work and for all the trouble she has taken in making arrangements for publication. I also wish to express my thanks to her assistant Miss Slowley.

The Colston Research Society kindly agreed to defray part of the cost of my researches.

The dedication of this volume to my wife is but a small acknowledgment of all the help she has given me in its production.

PATRICK MCGRATH.

University of Bristol,

June, 1952.

NOTE.—Extracts from the records of the Society of Merchant Venturers of Bristol may not be reproduced without permission from the Society.

INTRODUCTION

On 18 December 1552, king Edward VI granted to certain merchants of Bristol letters patent incorporating them as the Marchaunt Venturers of the City of Bristol.¹ After the changing fortunes of four hundred years, the Society incorporated by the young king still enjoys a vigorous life, although it serves now different purposes from those for which it was established in the mid-sixteenth century. This volume is concerned primarily with the seventeenth century, but a brief reference to earlier merchant organizations in Bristol is perhaps desirable in order to put the problem of the origins of the Society of Merchant Venturers in its proper setting.

I. *Merchant organizations in Bristol before 1552*

Some writers have seen the origin of the Society in an Act of Common Council of 1467, and others have suggested that the Society is in some way linked with the even earlier Gild Merchant. Before touching on this thorny and controversial problem, it is necessary to point out that the evidence is very limited. There are no early merchants' records, and there are many gaps in the information available in the municipal archives. Time and again, absence of evidence makes it impossible to say what relationship, if any, existed between one merchant organization and another.

In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, there are a number of references to a Gild Merchant in Bristol, but very little is known about the nature of this Gild Merchant, and there is no mention of it in the records after 1372. Continuity with later organizations of merchants cannot therefore be proved. Nor can it be shown that the gild of merchants which Miss Kramer claims was established in 1370 existed after that date.²

From the available evidence it seems likely that, whatever may

¹ A number of variations in the spelling of *Marchaunt* and of *Venturer* occur elsewhere in the patent. For the Society's later use of the style *Merchant Adventurer*, see pp. xxx, xxxi and notes.

² Stella Kramer, *The English Craft Gilds*, New York, 1927, pp. 29-30. The evidence on which she bases her statement is found in F. B. Bickley, *The Little Red Book of Bristol*, ii, 51-55.

have been the case earlier, the merchants of Bristol during the greater part of the fifteenth century were content to leave the regulation of foreign trade to the city government, in which they naturally played a leading part.¹ In 1467, however, the Common Council passed an Act "for goode sadde and profitable Rewle off and uppon iiii certaigne merchaundiszes usyd in Bristowe".² The Mayor and Sheriffs were instructed to call the Great Council every year within twenty days after Michaelmas, and with its advice to choose a member who had been either Mayor or Sheriff to be Master of the fellowship of merchants. They were also to choose two wardens and two beadles and brokers. The master and fellowship were to occupy Spicer's Hall and the Chapel belonging to it on the Back of Bristol.³ All merchants came under their jurisdiction regarding the four commodities, and the fellowship was empowered to fix the prices at which these commodities might be sold to strangers.

Little is known about the background of this Act, but it is perhaps justifiable to infer from the Act itself that at the time when it was passed there existed no separate organization of merchants in Bristol and that Common Council now decided to delegate to a newly created body, still very much under its control, certain limited powers by which the ancient ordinances concerning strangers' goods might be more effectively enforced.⁴ There is no further evidence concerning the organization thus created, and Latimer's statements that "it undoubtedly flourished" and that "a deed preserved in Merchants' Hall seems to show that the chapel in Spicer's Hall was soon deemed inadequate for its requirements"⁵ are erroneous, for the document of 1493 to which he referred made provision for a new chapel, not for the merchants, but for the mariners.⁶ If Common Council did in fact choose the

¹ For a petition from the merchants to Common Council asking for certain regulations to be made concerning foreign trade, see E. W. W. Veale, *The Great Red Book of Bristol Text Part III*, Bristol Record Society's Publications, vol. xvi, pp. 120-124. For other regulations by Common Council, see J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 15-16.

² The Act is printed in E. W. W. Veale, *The Great Red Book of Bristol Text Part III*, pp. 82-84. The four commodities were meat oil, wool oil, tren (train oil), and wax.

³ The Fellowship occupied different premises from those later used by the Society of Merchant Venturers whose Hall was in King Street.

⁴ In 1459 Common Council had issued regulations intended to enforce the ancient ordinances concerning the bringing of strangers' goods to Spicer's Hall. J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 15-16.

⁵ J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, p. 18.

⁶ The document is in the Merchants' Records. It is printed in J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 19-21. See also p. 66.

Master and other officials between 1467 and 1499, their names have not been preserved.

After 1467 there is once more a gap in the evidence until 1500. In that year Common Council passed another Act designed to regulate the sale of strangers' goods in the city.¹ It was decided that there should be established a Company or Fellowship of Merchants separate and distinct from every other company of handicraft men in Bristol. The first Master, Wardens and Beadles were appointed by Common Council and were required to take their oaths of office before the mayor, aldermen and sheriffs. In future, the Company was to meet yearly, within fourteen days after the feast of St. Michael, to elect its own officials. Sons and apprentices of members were to be admitted without fine provided they were burgesses, but those who were burgesses by redemption or by marriage were to pay an admission fine. The Master and Wardens were to meet twice a week in the Council House² to discuss the merchants' business and to settle disputes. The Company could make ordinances for the good rule of the fellowship, and members or burgesses who disobeyed them could be fined. No merchant of Bristol might freight any ship without permission from the Master and Wardens. When any ship arrived with the merchandise of strangers or aliens, the Company was to decide what was to be done with the cargo. A tax of a penny a ton on all merchandise and a halfpenny a ton on salt was to be levied for the use of the company. By these and other ordinances Common Council gave the Company complete control over the foreign trade of the city.³

In its organization and its powers, the Company of Merchants established in 1500 bears a marked resemblance to the Society of Merchant Venturers incorporated in 1552, and it is not unnatural to suggest that there was continuity between the two. It might be assumed that the merchants would not readily allow to lapse those extensive privileges given them by the city and that they would want to keep in being an organization devoted exclusively to their interests. It is significant that, although no copy of the ordinances of 1500 survives among the city's records, the Society of Merchant Venturers still preserves the original grant bearing the city's seal. Nevertheless continuity cannot be claimed with

¹ Printed in J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 26-35. The original is in the Merchants' Records.

² Not in Spicer's Hall as in the Ordinances of 1467.

³ Only a few points from these lengthy ordinances have been mentioned here.

certainty. There is no evidence to prove that the Fellowship established in 1500 did in fact go on. If it made any ordinances, they have not survived, and although the names of the first Master and Wardens are known from the Act itself, there is no record of any other Masters and Wardens between 1500 and the incorporation of the Merchant Venturers in 1552.

2. *From the incorporation of the Society to the reorganization of 1605*

In 1552, certain merchants of Bristol addressed to Edward VI a tearful petition in which they claimed that artificers and others with no knowledge of trade had been meddling in commerce with disastrous results. To remedy the alleged evils, the king incorporated the merchants and gave them certain powers. They were to have a Master and two Wardens who were to take their oaths before the Mayor and Aldermen, and they were authorized to make ordinances for the government of their art, provided these did not conflict with the rights of the Crown or the City and did not infringe the privileges of the Merchant Adventurers trading to the Netherlands. It was ordered "that noe Artificer of the Citty aforesaide for the tyme beinge shall exercise the recourse of marchandize into the kingdomes or dominions of the parties beyond the seas unlesse hee shalbee admitted into the saide Societie and State aforesaide by the saide Maister and wardens, Neither that any other but onelie those whoe have bine, or hereafter shalbee apprentice to ye saide Misterie or Arte of Marchaunts aforesaide or have vsed the same Misterie by the space of seauen yeeres".¹

From the point of view of national economic development, this grant was part of the Crown's policy of favouring "a well ordered trade", not open to all, but limited to privileged groups. It fits into the general picture of the second half of the sixteenth century when charters were granted to the Muscovy Company, to the Merchant Adventurers trading to the Netherlands and Germany, to the Eastland Company, to the Spanish Company, to the Levant Company, to various African Companies, and to groups of merchants in Newcastle, York, Chester, Hull, Exeter, and other towns.

From the point of view of local development, the importance

¹ The Letters Patent are in the Merchants' Records. They were printed by Latimer together with an early seventeenth-century translation found in *Book of Charters I*, 23-26.

of the grant was that it set up in Bristol a Society whose members enjoyed a monopoly of the foreign trade of the city and whose privileges rested not only on municipal authority but on royal authority as well.

The letters patent of Edward VI were confirmed by Elizabeth in 1566,¹ and in the same year the merchants secured an Act of Parliament confirming the royal grants.² The Act stated that a number of inhabitants of the city "of divers faculties and sciences" were trading as merchants, with the result that merchant adventurers who lived by trade only were unable to maintain themselves. After reciting the letters patent and pointing out that there were no penalties to enforce the regulations, the Act once again forbade artificers and those of other sciences from meddling in foreign trade. No one was to traffick beyond the seas "vnlesse the same person or persons bee nowe made, or hereafter shalbee admitted to bee, of the saide Societie or Corporacion aboue named by the maister and wardeyns of the saide Corporacion, Or els that hee or they have byne, or shalbee apprentice or apprentices, and served in and to the saide Arte or misterie of Marchaunts within the same Cittie or Liberties of the same by the space of seaven yeeres" under pain of forfeiting half the goods involved to the Crown and half to be divided between the Society and the City.

The triumph of 1566 was short-lived. There was apparently a struggle between the merchants and wealthy retailers like the grocers, the mercers, the haberdashers, and the vintners who objected to being excluded completely from foreign trade; and the merchants themselves may have been divided. The full story of the conflict is not known, but there are indications that the opponents of the Society managed temporarily to secure control of Common Council. The upshot was that the Mayor and Aldermen protested against the Act of 1566, and in the parliament of 1571, after a prolonged and heated struggle, it was repealed.³ This was a setback to the Society, but its charters

¹ The original is in the Merchants' Records. It is printed by Latimer together with a translation found in *Book of Charters I*, 27.

² *Statutes of the Realm*, iv, Part 1, p. 483. The text of the Act is found in *Book of Charters I*, 28-30, and is printed in J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 47-50.

³ For the arguments on both sides, see *Cal. S.P.D. Addenda, 1566-1579*, pp. 343-344. For the complaints of the Mayor and others against the Act of 1566, see *Cal. S.P.D. 1547-1580*, p. 408. See also Bristol Record Office: *Ordinances of Common Council* (04272), pp. 29, 30; *Commons Journals, I*, 84-86; *Statutes of the Realm*, iv, Part 1, 526; J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 52-57.

were still intact, and in the seventeenth century, when its members played the leading part in the government of the city, it once more attempted to establish a monopoly in foreign trade.

There are no records of the Bristol Merchant Venturers for the second half of the sixteenth century, and although the names of the Masters and Wardens for 1552, 1566 and 1569¹ are known from other sources, it cannot be shown that the Society enjoyed a continuous existence between 1552 and 1605.² The defeat of 1571 and the struggle with the city authorities may have given a serious blow to its prestige, but there are other reasons for its decline. Latimer thought that it was practically moribund by the end of the century and suggested that this was due to the prostration of commerce and industry.³ The trade depression and the war with Spain in the later part of Elizabeth's reign no doubt had serious effects on the merchant community of Bristol, but it was probably the emergence of a rival organization rather than the decay of trade that weakened the Bristol Society and made necessary drastic action by the city authorities in 1605. Latimer was aware that John Whitson and other prominent Bristol merchants had joined the Spanish Company, but he did not realize the extent to which Bristol was affected by the Company's development in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. In 1577 the Crown granted to the Spanish Company the sole right of trading with Spain and Portugal.⁴ The members were named in the letters patent and they included certain courtiers and officials, over two hundred London merchants, and one-hundred-and-seventy-three merchants from other towns. No less than seventy-six Bristolians were named as members, and Bristol supplied three of the forty Assistants. The earliest entry in the first Merchant Venturers' Treasurer's Book is an account for 1583 of the Company of Merchants of Bristol trading to Spain and Portugal.⁵ This is evidently an account not of the Society of Merchant Venturers but of the Spanish Company's Bristol branch which had its own officials and a number of members in other

¹ The Masters and Wardens of 1552 and 1566 are named in the Letters Patent and those for 1569 in the Grant of Arms.

² The almshouse and school were still being maintained in 1595 and the property and grant of anchorage were vested in trustees. Presumably the trustees could continue to act even if the Society itself was moribund.

³ J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 60, 62.

⁴ The Letters Patent to the Spanish Company are printed in V. M. Shillington and A. B. Wallis Chapman, *The Commercial Relations of England and Portugal*, pp. 313-326. For an account of the Company, see *ibid.*, pp. 146-176.

See p. 81, no. 163.

ports as well as in Bristol. There had thus come into existence in Bristol a provincial branch of a national company under the control of a headquarters in London, and any Bristolians who wished to trade with Spain or Portugal were bound to belong to it. Provincial independence had been in some measure lost, and Bristol merchants had to submit to regulations which they did not make themselves.¹

So little is known about either the Bristol branch of the Spanish Company or about the Bristol Merchant Venturers in the later sixteenth century that it is impossible to say whether the two did in fact exist simultaneously, and if they did, what were the relations between them. Assuming that the Merchant Venturers were still an active body when the Spanish Company was incorporated in 1577, there must have been for a time two distinct merchant organizations in Bristol, the one for merchants in general, the other limited to those trading to Spain or Portugal. No doubt many merchants would have belonged to both. It is possible, on the other hand, that after 1577 the Bristol Society of Merchant Venturers, while retaining its rights under the charter of 1552, also acted under the charter of the Spanish Company for those of its members who traded to Spain and Portugal.² The fact that one of the Spanish Company's accounts has been preserved in the Treasurer's Book of the Merchant Venturers may indicate some such relationship.³

The Spanish Company was thrown into confusion by the war with Spain, but after the peace of 1604 it obtained confirmation of its old privileges. A new patent was subsequently granted to it on 31 May, 1605, and the Company retained the monopoly of trade with Spain and Portugal. Of the five-hundred-and-seventy-seven merchants named in the patent no less than ninety-seven were Bristolians.⁴ No doubt it was the fact that almost the entire merchant community of Bristol belonged to a Company

¹ In 1578, Philip Langley, together with other merchants who had opposed the Act of 1566, but who had joined the Spanish Company, was said to be continuing "the trade of a notorious retailer" and was in danger of being brought before the Privy Council. *Acts of the Privy Council, 1577-1578*, pp. 408, 409.

² For a parallel case in Newcastle where a merchant organization with a long history acted under a new Charter of the Merchant Adventurers, see p. xxxiii.

³ It should be noted, however, that the appearance of this account in the Society's *Treasurer's Book* may be accidental. The accountant in 1583 was John Barker. The Master of the Society in 1617-18, when the Society's records were put in order, was also a John Barker. Possibly he inherited the book and decided it might be used to keep the Society's accounts.

⁴ See p. 2, no 1. Shillington and Chapman, *op. cit.*, pp. 160-165.

whose headquarters were in London that led Common Council to decide that the merchants of Bristol must separate from the Spanish Company and join an organization of their own. The decision was made on the last day of the year 1605, and may have been hastened by the fact that the Spanish Company's Charter was already under heavy fire.¹ The next year, Parliament opened the Spanish and Portuguese trades to all subjects of the English crown.²

3. *The constitution of the Merchant Venturers of Bristol in the seventeenth century.*³

The Act of Common Council of 31 December, 1605, which reorganized the merchant body is printed below.⁴ The corporation appointed the Master and other officers, and laid down the conditions of admission. Membership was open to all burgesses provided they paid a fine of twenty shillings and agreed to abandon all other occupations. All other merchants "which are already Free of the same Company" were to pay only 6s. 8d. The act made no reference to the Charter of 1552 although the reference to merchants who were "already Free of the same Company" suggests that the Society was still active at the time when the act was passed. The Master and Wardens appointed by the corporation were the same as those apparently chosen by the Merchant Venturers at a General Court held seven months earlier in May 1605.⁵ The authority for the May election is an entry in *Book of Charters I* which was not begun until 1618,⁶ thirteen years after the event, and which surprisingly makes no reference to the reorganization of the Society in December 1605 or to the officers then appointed by the corporation. Possibly by 1618 the Society was not anxious to stress the part played by the city government in giving it a new lease of life.

In 1606, Parliament opened the French, Spanish and Portuguese trades to all subjects of the English Crown. Although the Bristol Merchant Venturers were no doubt delighted at the destruction of the Spanish Company's monopoly, they were anxious to pre-

¹ For the arguments for and against the Company, see C. T. Carr, *Select Charters of Trading Companies* (Selden Society, vol. xxviii), pp. xxiv, xxv.

² *Statutes of the Realm*, iv, Part ii, 1083.

³ See Section I, pp. 1-33.

⁴ P. 3, no. 2.

⁵ See p. 54, no. 93, and note 1.

⁶ See pp. xli-vi-xlii.

serve their own monopoly, and they did not welcome a Bill which would permit any Bristolian to trade with three important overseas markets. They therefore tried to get their charters excepted from the Act, but Parliament was unsympathetic, and unlike the merchants of Exeter they failed in their attempt.¹ This did not prevent them from behaving as though the Act did not affect their charters, and in April 1612 Common Council authorized the Society to make ordinances, by virtue of its charters, forbidding its members from exercising any other trade and prohibiting any one except its members from using the trade of a merchant adventurer.² The necessary ordinances were prepared and submitted to Common Council which referred them to a committee.³ Latimer stated that they were confirmed by Common Council in August 1612.⁴ They probably were, since Common Council had already approved them in principle, but there is in fact no record of the confirmation.

The next important development in the Society's constitution was in 1618. In June of that year the Society reaffirmed the principle that only its own members might engage in foreign trade,⁵ and set up a committee to revise the ordinances. The new ordinances were promulgated in November 1618.⁶ They defined the duties of the Master and other officers and established for the first time a number of Assistants. They laid down elaborate regulations for the holding of Courts and the keeping of records, and they made a number of regulations regarding the admission of members which differed considerably from those of 1605. Sons or apprentices of "meer merchants" in the Society could claim the freedom on payment of certain small fees. Redemptioners had to pay a composition fine the amount of which was not fixed, and their sons had to pay 40s. in addition to the usual fees. No retailer was to be admitted without the consent of a special court. There were a number of regulations prohibiting members from entering into partnership with non-members and from co-operating with them either directly or through their agents. A penny in the pound was to be levied on seamen's wages for the upkeep of the Society's almshouse. No reference was made to the City's

¹ See p. 6, no. 3, and note 2.

² See p. 6, no. 4.

³ See p. 6, no. 5.

⁴ J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, p. 66.

⁵ See p. 7, no. 6.

⁶ *Book of Charters I*, 69-81; J. Latimer, *op. cit.*, pp. 68-80.

ordinances of 1605. The Society evidently now stood on its own feet.

In the seventeenth century, all companies were harassed by interlopers who challenged their monopolies and interfered with their well-ordered trade. The Society had to face the threat, not only of unauthorized intruders but also of those who could claim that an Act of Parliament in 1606 had opened the French, Spanish and Portuguese markets to all subjects of the English Crown. At the time, the Society had failed in its effort to get its charters excepted from the act, but in 1621 and 1624 it once more made determined efforts to obtain the parliamentary backing which it had enjoyed from 1566 to 1571.¹ The city this time gave enthusiastic support² and there was much correspondence with the M.P.s, themselves Merchant Venturers, who attempted to obtain parliamentary confirmation of the charters and a grant of further privileges. But on neither occasion was a Bill actually brought in, and at a time when monopolies were under heavy fire it would probably have stood little chance of success.

On 7 January, 1639, Charles I granted letters patent to the Society confirming those of Edward VI and Elizabeth and making some important changes in the Society's constitution and powers.³ In future elections were to be held on 10 November yearly and the number of Assistants was reduced from twelve to ten. The Master named in the Charter was to take his oath before the Mayor and Aldermen, but in future officers were to be sworn in by the out-going Master and Wardens. The powers given to the Society for the control of foreign trade were much more explicit than in earlier charters, for it was authorized to make ordinances "for the good rule government ordering surveying search and correccion of the Mistery or Art aforesaid and of all the works wares goods and merchandizes which the same Master Wardens and Comminalty and their Successors or any other Merchants or other persons whatsoever of the City aforesaid adventuring beyond the Seas shall export or import out of or into the Realm of England or Dominion of Wales As also of all men and Merchants of the City aforesaid and their Servants Factors Apprentices and Agents of the Art or Mistery aforesaid trading as well in the said City as in parts beyond the Seas". The Society could levy fines

¹ See pp. 9-14, nos. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. J. Latimer, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-83.

² See pp. 12-14, nos. 11, 12.

³ The original is in the Merchants' Records. A translation from *Book of Charters II*, 31-42, is printed by J. Latimer, *op. cit.*, pp. 88-97.

on all who broke its ordinances provided these ordinances were reasonable and not repugnant to the laws and customs of the realm or to the prejudice of the Mayor or of the Merchant Adventurers trading to Holland, Zealand, Brabant, Flanders and other parts.

The Society then drew up new Ordinances which were promulgated on 4 April, 1639.¹ Only some of them can be noted here. No member was to receive from a non-member any goods to carry beyond the seas for that person's use, or to buy goods beyond the seas for the profit of a non-member. No member was to lade any ship in Bristol with goods of a non-member or put his goods on the ship of an outsider in a foreign port if a ship laden by members of the Society was available. The goods of strangers arriving in Bristol, if worth more than £200, were to be taken to Spicer's Hall. The Society was then to meet and to appoint four men to bargain for the goods and to proportion them out among members of the Society. There were numerous regulations affecting sailors and shipping, and an effort was made to prevent ships' crews trading goods on their own account without paying freightage.

In its Ordinances of 1639, the Society appeared to acknowledge that non-members were engaging in overseas trade. Although its new Charter explicitly permitted it to make ordinances for all Bristolians engaged in overseas commerce, it did not attempt to make them all join the Society, but contented itself with forbidding its own members from co-operating with them in any way. Latimer suggested that the reason why the Society did not make regulations against such interlopers was that its Charter did not allow it to make ordinances repugnant to the law of the land, and he argued that it must soon have become apparent that any attempt to restrain the chief commerce of non-members would have been a violation of the Act of 1606 which permitted all subjects of the English Crown to trade with France, Spain and Portugal.² His explanation is not entirely satisfactory. The Act of 1606 had not in fact prevented the Crown giving a monopoly of the French trade to a new French Company in 1611³ nor had it discouraged Common Council from authorizing the Society to make ordinances limiting foreign trade to its own members in

¹ *Book of Charters II*, 11-28; J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 98-105.

² J. Latimer, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

³ C. T. Carr, *Select Charters of Trading Companies* (Selden Society, vol. xxviii), p. 62 ff.

1612.¹ The Act would not, in any case, have prevented the Society from trying to exclude non-members from the Irish, the Mediterranean and the West India trades. Nevertheless, it does seem probable that the Society had for the time being decided that it could not enforce the monopoly granted in its Charters unless it had parliamentary backing, and this it had failed to obtain in 1621 and 1624. It had not permanently abandoned hope of getting its charters confirmed by Act of Parliament, but for the time being it was content to regulate rather than to exclude outsiders. The Charter of 1639 explicitly gave it considerable control over all engaged in foreign trade. Its ordinances concerning wharfage, pilotage, shipping and other matters affecting members and non-members alike now had royal as well as municipal authority behind them, and non-members could not successfully challenge ordinances like those which made strangers' goods available only to members of the Society,² or which later imposed a new duty of *wharfage outwards* on those who did not belong to it.³

In 1643 when Bristol was held for the king and London for Parliament, Charles I granted the Society its fourth charter which opened to its members the trades of the Eastland Company, the Russia Company, the Levant Company and the Merchant Adventurers of London.⁴ Similar concessions were made to other ports loyal to the king, but from the point of view of the Bristol merchants the opening of the Levant trade was of special importance for in the past there had been considerable conflict with the Levant Company.⁵

In the years after the Restoration, the merchants of Bristol prospered considerably, but equal success did not attend the Society's efforts to get its privileges confirmed and extended. Although Charles II granted another Charter in 1665 exemplifying that of 1643,⁶ the Levant Company, supported at one time by the Merchant Adventurers of England, offered determined opposition to the claims of Bristolians to trade freely in the Levant;⁷ and any hope the Society might still have entertained of enforcing

¹ See p. 6, no. 4.

² J. Latimer, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-103.

³ See p. 171, no. 369.

⁴ The original is in the Merchants' Records. It is printed in J. Latimer, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-107.

⁵ See pp. 213-220, nos. 433-441.

⁶ The original is in the Merchants' Records. A copy is printed in J. Latimer, *op. cit.*, pp. 109, 110.

⁷ See pp. 218-220.

its own monopoly of trade in Bristol must have been dissipated by the failure in 1662 of a Bill confirming the Charter of 1552¹ and by the lack of success attending the vigorous efforts made between 1661 and 1670 to obtain further privileges from Parliament and the Crown.²

Roger North remarked of Bristol in the later seventeenth century that "all men that are dealers, even in shop trades, launch into adventures by sea, chiefly to the West India plantations and Spain",³ and the evidence of the Burgess Rolls and the Port Books shows that, apart from the petty dealers, there were many merchants who did not join the Merchant Venturers. The Society had in fact failed in its attempt to establish a monopoly, but during the seventeenth century it had grown very considerably in status, and from being a weak protégé of the corporation, it had become the controlling force in the organization of the city's trade and shipping. It could offer to its members not only considerable material advantages but also the prestige of belonging to a powerful and influential organization working in the closest harmony with the city government.

4. *Membership, organization and administration of the Society in the seventeenth century*⁴

When a Register was first drawn up in 1618, the Society of Merchant Venturers of Bristol had a membership of seventy-two, but in the course of the century this number fluctuated considerably. The effects of the Civil War, for example, were seen in a drop from eighty-three in January 1640⁵ to fifty-seven in May 1645.⁶ There were still only fifty-seven members two years later,⁷ but the figure rose to seventy-three in 1652;⁸ to seventy-eight in 1659;⁹ and to ninety-nine in 1671.¹⁰ In the last decade it stood in the nineties, but the hundred mark was not reached.

The means by which admission could be obtained are noted

¹ See p. 15, no. 15.

² See pp. 15-26; J. Latimer, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-109.

³ *Lives of the Norths*, edit. A. Jessopp, 1890, i, 156.

⁴ See Sections, I, II, III, pp. 1-65.

⁵ *Hall Book I*, 19.

⁶ *Hall Book I*, 71.

⁷ *Hall Book I*, 102.

⁸ *Hall Book I*, 209.

⁹ *Hall Book I*, 293.

¹⁰ *Hall Book II*, 9.

elsewhere.¹ The evidence suggests that, although it excluded retailers, the Society did not refuse membership to any who practised the art of a merchant. It is true that between 1619 and 1699 there were some two hundred merchants admitted to the freedom of Bristol who did not become Merchant Venturers,² but this was not because the Society tried to keep them out. Only on rare occasions did it reject applicants, and its admission fees were surprisingly moderate.³ The reason why a number of merchants remained outside the Society is not clear, but the explanation may be that they objected to the rule which forbade members to sell retail.

The chief officers of the Society were the Master, the two Wardens, the Treasurer and the Assistants, all of whom were elected annually at a General Court and whose duties were defined in the Ordinances. There was at first no restriction on the choice of a Master or a Warden, but in April 1639 it was decided that the Master must previously have held office as either Master, Warden or Assistant, and that the Wardens must be chosen from the Assistants.⁴ Later, an ordinance of November 1639 decreed that the Master must in future be chosen from three persons, one of whom was nominated by the out-going Master, one by the Wardens, and a third by the Comminality.⁵ The Assistants were supposed to be chosen from "the most discreet wise and worthie men" of the Society.

The highest offices in the Society were reached by a considerable proportion of the members and were not generally speaking the preserve of a clique. Rather more than half the members between 1620 and 1700 served as Assistants, and from 1605 to 1700 there were in all one-hundred-and-fifty-five different Wardens of whom only twenty-six held the office more than once. The Treasurership was held by one member for ten years and by two others for six years,⁶ but even in this office there were repeated changes with a result that there were sixty-one different Treasurers between 1605 and 1700. In the same period, sixty-seven different individuals occupied the Master's chair, and although Humphrey Hooke created a record by being Master no

¹ pp. 34-35.

² See p. 2, and note 2.

³ See p. 35.

⁴ J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 98-99.

⁵ See p. 55, no. 97.

⁶ Robert Yate, 1665-1672 and 1674-1676; Walter Tocknell, 1658-1664; Richard Hart, 1677-1683.

less than seven times and Hugh Browne and Joseph Jackson both held the office four times, they were exceptional, and only fifteen others were elected Master more than once. The fine for refusing the office of Master or Warden was £20 and for that of Treasurer £10, but no one seems to have refused in the seventeenth century.

The officers of the Society were assisted in their duties by a small staff consisting principally of the Clerk and the Beadle. There were also at various times an Assistant Clerk, a Collector of Hall Duties, and a Collector of Wharfage, but the staff does not seem to have been more than three at any one time.

The Ordinances of 1618 required the Clerk to be diligent in attending the officers, to be of honest and courteous behaviour to members, and to register all the acts "incontinent after they be concluded". It was perhaps a compliment to his literary ability that he was allowed "to amend the phrase or enditinge, by takeing, adding or altering any Wordes, soe as the meaninge be not altered". Besides keeping the minutes, he had to maintain an Apprentice Book¹ and keep a secret Register of those who broke the ordinances.² In 1639 he was ordered to bring all records into the Hall and in future he was not to make records outside without special permission.³ His salary was originally £4 a year,⁴ but this was later raised to £10,⁵ and he received a fee of 6d. from those claiming the freedom and 4d. from those enrolling as apprentices.⁶ The Clerk was allowed to have an assistant in 1641,⁷ possibly because his office had been combined with that of the Beadle, but no salary was voted for the assistant and the experiment was not repeated. The Society seems to have had only three Clerks between 1618 and the end of the century—Richard Griffith, John Hartwell and Francis Yeamans. The first of these also acted for a time as Collector of Hall Duties.⁸

The Beadle was a man of some importance.⁹ He collected the Society's rents, made payments to the almspeople, disbursed

¹ J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, p. 77.

² *Ibid.*, p. 79.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 70.

⁵ See p. 57, no. 103. When the office of Clerk was combined with that of Beadle in 1639, the salary was £8 a year.

⁶ J. Latimer, *op. cit.*, pp. 76, 77.

⁷ See p. 56, no. 98.

⁸ His accounts for 1621-1630 are in the *Book of Trade*.

⁹ His duties were defined in the 1618 Ordinances. See J. Latimer, *op. cit.*, 70-71.

various sums for building and repairs, and was responsible for the property in the Hall. He handled considerable sums of money and was required to give bond for the proper discharge of his duties. His salary in 1618 was fixed at £6 13s. 4d., more than that of the Clerk, and this was raised by various stages to £20 a year before the end of the century.¹ In addition he got two shillings in the pound from money collected from absentees and a fee of 4d. from those claiming the freedom.

In 1639, the offices of Clerk and Beadle were combined, and a Collector of the Hall's Duties now became responsible for receiving cannage, plankage, anchorage, poundage, tonnage, wharfage, quarterage and other duties previously collected by the beadle.² His salary in 1642 was £30 a year³ and this was raised to £40 in 1650.⁴ In 1666, however, a Beadle was once more appointed, this time at a salary of £12 a year,⁵ but he no longer handled the duties of wharfage and anchorage which became the responsibility of another official known as the Collector of Wharfage.⁶

Before 1639, the date of the annual Court for the election of officers varied, but the meeting was always in October, November or December.⁷ From 1639, it was always held on 10 November. On that day, members heard a sermon, elected the officers, appointed auditors, distributed alms, and concluded the proceedings with the annual dinner. The Ordinances required that a General Court should be held at least four times a year at specified times. There are occasional references to Courts of Assistants,⁸ and in 1664 owing to difficulties in getting members to attend General Courts, it was decided that the Master, Wardens,

¹ See pp. 59, 64, 65, nos. 107, 114, 117.

² J. Latimer, *op. cit.*, pp. 99, 100.

³ *Hall Book I*, 57.

⁴ *Hall Book I*, 154.

⁵ *Hall Book I*, 395. Richard Locke was admitted at a salary of £12 a year in place of Richard Ashe deceased. Ashe had been Collector since 1642 (*Hall Book I*, 57). Richard Locke was later referred to as the beadle (*Hall Book I*, 438).

⁶ See p. 93, no. 166, for receipts from Eusebius Brooke who collected the wharfage money.

⁷ *Book of Charters I* records the dates of the Annual Courts. The fact that the Court was always held in the last three months of the year makes the entry for 1605, when it was stated to have been held in May, all the more open to doubt. See p. 54, no. 93, and p. xvi. The 1618 Ordinances required the election to be on the Tuesday after 5 November if no extraordinary occasion hindered it. It was, however, frequently held in December or late November.

⁸ The 1618 and the 1639 Ordinances both made provision for Courts of Assistants. From 1639, the Master, one Warden and the majority of the Assistants had to be present at all General Courts.

Treasurer; Assistants and Clerks should meet to transact business at least three times a year and should be provided with a dinner at a cost not exceeding £4.¹

The elaborate rules for the holding of Courts laid down in the ordinances make it possible to form some idea of what Hall Meetings were like; and some conception of the setting in which they took place can be gained from the inventories of the property in the Hall.² General Courts were held at the Merchants' Hall in King street, but the various committees, of which the Society made great use, generally preferred to meet in one of Bristol's numerous taverns.

5. *The finances of the Society in the seventeenth century*³

In the first half of the seventeenth century, the Society had only a small annual income and had to make a little money go a long way. In the earliest surviving account, that of 1610-11, its receipts for the year amounted to less than £150,⁴ and in 1617-18 they were under £200. There were a number of fluctuations in the Society's financial position in later years, and there are some big gaps in the accounts,⁵ but it is probably true to say that before the Restoration income did not normally exceed £200 a year and that in the disturbances between 1640 and 1660 it was often considerably less than that. Up to 1660 the Society had not undertaken any major building operations nor made any considerable investments in property, and yet in November 1659 it ended its financial year with a credit balance of only 6s. 11d. In the post-Restoration period, however, its financial position improved considerably. Receipts from wharfage and other port dues increased, partly because of an expansion in trade and partly because of an increase in the rates. Entry fines became larger and capital investments began to bear fruit. In the last decade of the century, the Society's income was probably in the neighbourhood of £700 to £800 a year, but on this it had considerable standing charges, and capital expenditure on property and port improvements was possible only because it could raise loans without much difficulty.

The chief sources of revenue for the Society were various port

¹ See p. 56, no. 101.

² See pp. 68, 71, nos. 126, 134.

³ See Section VI, pp. 81-95.

⁴ See p. 84, no. 164.

⁵ See pp. li, lii.

dues, the most valuable of which was wharfage. This was first imposed by the city in 1606 and was charged on goods imported into Bristol. The Society at first collected the duty for the City, but from 1611 it was allowed, apparently by an informal arrangement, to keep the money for its own use, and from 1661 it had a formal agreement.¹ In 1614-15, the duty brought in less than £100,² but in the post-Restoration period income from this source was on the average a little over £400 a year.³ Other port dues were less valuable. In 1614-15, for instance, anchorage, keyage, plankage, tonnage and poundage together amounted to only £55 17s. 3d. In the later part of the century, only anchorage was of any importance. The rate was increased and from 1679 to 1694 the yearly receipts amounted to about £60.⁴

The Society did not have an annual subscription, and although the 1639 ordinances required all members to pay quarterage at the rate of 4d. a quarter,⁵ there is no record of it being collected. It would in any case have brought in only £5 or £6 a year. On the other hand, those admitted by redemption had to pay an entry fine, and in the post-Restoration period when the number of redemptioners increased and fines became larger, entry fines were of some importance as a source of revenue. In 1665, for example, fines from five redemptioners amounted to £80 and in 1690 four redemptioners contributed in all £100.⁶

Rents and fines from property were not of much significance until the last quarter of the century when the Society purchased a great part of the manor of Clifton and also acquired an interest in valuable property in Bristol. In the last ten years of the century Bristol and Clifton rents were bringing in from £150 to £200 a year,⁷ apart from occasional windfalls such as an entry fine of £200 from a house on the quay, £120 from the tenant of a house in the Castle, and over £500 from a tenant of the George Inn.⁸

From a fairly limited annual income, the Society had to meet from time to time considerable capital charges. It made a large contribution to an expedition against the Turks in 1621,⁹ and it

¹ See p. 136.

² *Book of Trade*, Collector's Account, 1614-15.

³ Based on the *Wharfage Books*, 1660-1694.

⁴ Based on the *Wharfage Books*, 1679-1694.

⁵ A new ordinance of 1639. See J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, p. 100.

⁶ *Hall Book I*, 375, 377, 383; *Hall Book II*, 447, 452, 456.

⁷ See *Beadle's Books*.

⁸ *Treasurer's Book II*, 68.

⁹ See Section IX.

spent over £2,500 on extending and improving the quays in the years 1661-1663 and 1690-1693.¹ The purchase of a three-quarter share of the manor of Clifton cost it £1,750 in 1676,² and another £911 15s. was spent on further property there in 1699.³ Fines for the George Inn and houses in the Castle amounted to £480 in 1685-86,⁴ and work on Rownham Way and the Hotwell cost nearly £350 in 1688.⁵ In the last decade of the century, the rebuilding of the almshouse also required large expenditure.

Another important part of the Society's work was to defend the merchants' interests, and this was a costly and recurring charge on the Society's resources, involving heavy expenses for agents sent to London, fees to lawyers and presents to those likely to be helpful.

Charitable gifts and pensions were another big item of expenditure. The Beadle's Accounts show regular payments of over £100 a year to almspeople and to pensioners in the last decade of the century, and there was a host of miscellaneous gifts.

Regular annual charges included salaries and gifts for the Clerk, the Beadle, the Collector, the schoolmaster, and the various clergymen who preached in St. Stephen's, attended the almspeople and officiated in the chapel at Shirehampton, while from 1670 the Society was responsible for paying the salary of the haven-master.⁶ There were also continual charges for repairing property, looking after the quays and conserving the river.

Entertainment expenses were also of some importance. The cost of the annual dinner rose from a modest £6 2s. in 1617 to much more considerable sums later in the century. When the Duke of Beaufort was made Lord Lieutenant in 1672, the Society spent nearly £80 in entertaining him,⁷ and in 1684 £56 was spent on the dinner and another £33 on the duke.⁸

The miscellaneous nature of the Society's expenditure will be evident from the documents printed below. Behind the bare bones of the financial records, we catch a glimpse of a society which started with very limited resources but which grew more prosperous as the tide of national wealth rose in the course of the

¹ *Treasurer's Book II*, 13, 15, 16; *Beadle's Book I*, 26, 49 58.

² See p. 131, no. 264.

³ See p. 132, no. 270.

⁴ *Treasurer's Book II*, 47.

⁵ *Beadle's Book I*, 10, 11.

⁶ See p. 159, no. 341.

⁷ See p. 77, no. 152.

⁸ *Treasurer's Book II*, 44.

century. It provided a fighting fund to defend the merchants' interests, it made judicious investments, it undertook considerable public works, and while it provided certain amenities for its own members, it made an important contribution to the social welfare of Bristol.

6. *The Society of Merchant Venturers and the City Government*

An examination of the lists of civic officials and members of Common Council in seventeenth-century Bristol shows clearly the dominant part played by Merchant Venturers in municipal government. They constituted approximately half of the Common Councillors chosen during the period, and the key positions in city politics were more often than not in their hands. Of the hundred-and-five Mayors elected between 1600 and 1700, at least sixty-nine were Merchant Venturers, as were sixty-five of the hundred-and-sixteen aldermen, eight of the eleven City Chamberlains and over half the sheriffs.¹ An illustration of what this meant in practice is provided by the composition of the city government in July 1643.² At that time Common Council consisted of forty members. Twenty-eight of these, including the Mayor, the City Chamberlain, nine of the eleven aldermen and both the sheriffs were Merchant Venturers. Again, in the newly constituted corporation of 1684, twenty-four of the forty-three members belonged to the Society, and they included the Mayor, the City Chamberlain, six aldermen and one of the sheriffs.³ At that time the Recorder and the Town Clerk were also *ex gratia* members. Thus in the Common Council of seventeenth-century Bristol there was a solid block of Merchant Venturers normally holding more than half the seats and occupying those key positions which counted for so much in the executive and judicial work of a closed seventeenth-century corporation.

Merchant Venturers were equally prominent as the City's representatives in Parliament. Of the thirty-one members who

¹ The official Register of the Society does not begin until 1618, and it is therefore difficult in some instances to decide whether a man was a Merchant Venturer or not, but the figures given are substantially correct. In the same period, the Drapers provided only 7 Mayors; the Brewers, 5; the Grocers, 4; the Soapmakers, 3; the Ironmongers, 3; the Sugar Bakers, 2; the Innkeepers, 2; and the Chandlers, 2. No other group provided more than 1.

² For the list of Common Council at that time, see Miss H. E. Nott, *The Deposition Books of Bristol*, vol. 1 (Bristol Record Society's Publications, Vol. VI), pp. 263-264. See also A. B. Beaven, *Bristol Lists*.

³ For a list of Common Council in 1684, see R. C. Latham, *Bristol Charters, 1509-1899* (Bristol Record Society's Publications, Vol. XII), pp. 178-182.

sat for Bristol between 1601 and 1698, twenty belonged to the Society.¹ Of the remaining eleven, five were City Recorders and one the Town Clerk. In nearly half the Parliaments of the period, Bristol was represented by two Merchant Venturers.

The fact that members of the Society constituted so large a part of the city government explains in no small measure the close co-operation between the two bodies and the considerable independence from municipal control that the Society was allowed to enjoy. Although on two occasions there were minor disagreements,² in general the city government gave full support to the Society. The Certificates of the Mayor and Aldermen in 1621, 1624 and 1668,³ backing enthusiastically the Society's efforts to secure a confirmation of its charters and an increase in its privileges, are evidence of a very different attitude from that adopted by the corporation in 1571 when it secured the repeal of the Act of 1566 confirming the merchants' charters, and stands in marked contrast to the sharp treatment meted out to the Bakers' Company when it tried to secure a measure of independence.⁴ Not only did the corporation show no jealousy of the Society's extensive privileges but it even relaxed that measure of control which belonged to it by the charters. The practice of the Master taking his oath before the Mayor seems to have been dropped early in the century, and the last occasion on which the Society had to submit its ordinances for approval seems to have been in 1612.⁵ The ordinances of 1618 and 1639 which affected non-members as well as members were not presented to Common Council for ratification, and from time to time the Society altered the wharfage rates on its own authority. In its freedom from municipal control, the Society enjoyed privileges that were not conceded to any other organization in Bristol.

The corporation gave the Society this special consideration not only because Merchant Venturers played a leading part in city government and represented the most important economic interests in the city, but also because in return for its privileges the Society relieved the corporation of a great deal of expense and hard work. It undertook considerable improvements and extensions in the port, it surveyed the channel and removed

¹ A list of M.P.s for Bristol is given in A. B. Beaven, *Bristol Lists*.

² See p. 144, no. 302, and J. Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, pp. 246-247.

³ See p. 12, no. 11, p. 14, no. 12, and note 3.

⁴ J. Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, pp. 58-59.

⁵ See p. 7, no. 5.

obstacles in the river, it made provisions for the safety of shipping, it paid the haven-master, and it made regulations and wagescales for the pilots and the porters. The Society also held a watching brief for the commercial interests of Bristol, and took vigorous and often costly action to see that they were safeguarded. Matters which were officially the responsibility of the corporation could often be conveniently referred to this body of commercial experts. Thus the royal order to raise a contribution for an expedition against the Turkish pirates was sent to the mayor, but it was the Society that protested with effect against the amount of the assessment and arranged the collection of the money;¹ and when Sir Ferdinando Gorges asked for help in connection with his colonial schemes, the mayor promptly referred the matter to the Merchant Venturers.² Although it was an independent body, the Society acted in many ways as the corporation's Committee for Trade and Navigation, while its charitable work helped in some measure to deal with the problem of poverty in seventeenth-century Bristol.

Conflict between the City and the Society in the seventeenth century could have arisen only if there had been represented on Common Council other powerful groups whose interests were opposed to those of the merchants. Such groups did not exist, and the struggles that took place in the city government were on political and religious rather than on economic lines. There were Merchant Venturers on both sides in the disputes of the Civil War and of the post-Restoration period, and the Society itself seems to have remained aloof from political controversies.

7. *The Bristol Society and other organizations of Merchant Adventurers*

The terms *merchant venturer* and *merchant adventurer* which were at first used in a general way of individuals trading beyond the seas came in time to be applied to organized groups of merchants, and the fact that there existed in London, Newcastle, York, Hull and other towns societies of Merchant Adventurers related to, and in some measure under the control of, a body called from the sixteenth century the Merchant Adventurers of England has led certain writers astray with regard to the Bristol Society.³ Misunderstanding was perhaps made easier by the fact

¹ See pp. 179-187.

² See p. 201, no. 418.

³ E. Lipson, *Economic History of England*, i, 573-4, and ii, 255, and note 2, seems to suggest that it was affiliated to the Merchant Adventurers of England.

that the Bristol organization, although it was incorporated in 1552 as the Society of Merchant Venturers of Bristol,¹ received its grant of arms in 1569 under the style of the Merchant Adventurers of Bristol and continued to use that style throughout the seventeenth century.² It is therefore necessary to emphasize the facts that the Society of Merchant Venturers of Bristol was an independent organization, that it was not connected with the Merchant Adventurers of England, and that it differed in many ways from societies of Merchant Adventurers in other provincial towns. A brief examination of the national organization and its relations with its members in the provinces may help to bring out the special characteristics of the Bristol Society.

The origins of the Company of Merchant Adventurers of England need not concern us here. As it took shape in the later Middle Ages it was a body of merchants concerned mainly but not exclusively with the export of English cloth to Holland, Zealand, Brabant and Flanders. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries it became increasingly powerful and with the help of royal charters it strengthened its organization and asserted its control over all English merchants trading to the areas in which it had a monopoly. These areas came to include the markets of North Germany. It was a regulated, not a joint-stock, company, and its members traded as individuals or in partnerships under the strict rules laid down by the company. Although Londoners, and the London mercers in particular, played a leading part in it, it was not a London company for its headquarters were abroad and it had members not only in London but in many provincial towns.³

From the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries there were a

¹ "per nomen Magistri custodium et Communitatis de Marchaunt Venturers civitatis Bristoll." Variations in spelling of both words occur in the original and in the seventeenth-century translation. The Grant of Arms of 1569 states that Edward incorporated "the company and fellowship of the marchant aduenturars of Bristoll by the name of maister wardens and comunitie of the misterie or arte or marchants aduenturars." This inaccuracy may explain the later use of the style Merchant Adventurer.

² For one of the very rare occasions in the seventeenth century when the merchants referred to themselves as Merchant Venturers, see *Hall Book I*, 164 (7 August, 1650). The reversion to the original style *Merchant Venturer* seems to have taken place in the sixties of the eighteenth century. *Book of Charters II*, which goes up to 1765, uses the style *Merchant Adventurer* until the last three petitions which were made in November 1764 and January 1765 (see *Book of Charters II*, pp. 371-373). In *Book of Petitions 1765-1850*, the style Merchant Adventurer appears occasionally in the early entries.

³ See W. E. Lingelbach, "The Internal Organisation of the Merchant Adventurers of England", *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, N.S. xvi, 1902; Miss E. M. Carus-Wilson, "The Origins and Early Development of the Merchant Adventurers' Organisation in London as shown in their own Mediaeval Records", *Economic History Review*, April 1933.

number of conflicts between the General Court of the company abroad and various groups of members in the provinces. Underlying these struggles was the fact that the provincial groups were fighting for a measure of independence against an organization which, although it was not a London company, was dominated by powerful London merchants whose policy on a number of points conflicted with provincial interests.¹

The relationship between the Merchant Adventurers of England and their provincial members was a complicated one, for conditions varied from town to town, and even in the same town there might be a number of changes in the organization of the provincial merchants from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries. In some towns, members of the national organization did not form local branches but dealt with headquarters simply as individuals. In others, there existed at various times a local branch of the national society side by side with a larger organization of all the merchants of the town. This larger organization might itself be known as a society of Merchant Adventurers, even though it was not a branch of the Merchant Adventurers of England. In other towns, there was at times only one merchant organization containing large numbers of merchants belonging to the national society, and acting in some measure as a branch of it, but nevertheless existing in its own right under royal charter and containing some members who did not belong to the organization of the Merchant Adventurers of England since they did not trade to the areas in which that body had a monopoly. Some illustrations from particular towns may help to make clearer these complex relationships.

In Newcastle, there existed a Fellowship of Merchants which, although its records do not begin till 1477, was possibly descended from the Gild Merchant granted by king John.² Some of the members of this Fellowship traded to the areas controlled by the Merchant Adventurers of England and thus had to belong to the national organization. In 1519, the Newcastle Fellowship agreed to pay to the Merchant Adventurers of England the sum of £8 a year as the dues of all members of the national society dwelling in Newcastle. Sons and apprentices of Newcastle merchants were to be admitted to the freedom of the company at its residence

¹ For a general account of these disputes, see E. Lipson, *Economic History of England*, 1947, ii, 254 ff.

² For the history of the Newcastle Society, see *Extracts from the Records of the Merchant Adventurers of Newcastle-upon-Tyne*, 2 vols., edited by F. W. Dendy (Surtees Society, vols. XCIII and CI).

abroad on special terms. In the mid-sixteenth century, Edward VI incorporated those Newcastle merchants who were members of the Merchant Adventurers of England as the Governor, Assistants and Fellowship of the Merchant Adventurers of Newcastle. This did not lead to the establishment of two separate organizations of merchants in Newcastle, for the Fellowship of Merchant Adventurers while enjoying the privileges under the new charter continued to exercise those powers which had formerly belonged to the Newcastle Fellowship of Merchants,¹ and among its members were a number of merchants who did not belong to the Merchant Adventurers of England. The Newcastle society of Merchant Adventurers thus had a dual nature. From one point of view it was a branch of the national organization exercising authority over those of its members who belonged to the Merchant Adventurers of England; from another point of view it was simply the old Fellowship of Merchants of Newcastle under another name. This arrangement was not entirely satisfactory from the point of view of the Merchant Adventurers of England, and in 1663, in the course of a long dispute with the Newcastle society, they actually established for a time their own local branch in Newcastle in opposition to the Newcastle Merchant Adventurers. The Newcastle merchant, however, brought a writ of *quo warranto* against this "New Hance" on the grounds that it infringed their Charters, and they succeeded in bringing to an end what might have developed into a formidable rival society.² It may also be noted that there were in Newcastle a number of merchants engaged in the Eastland trade and belonging to the local branch of the Eastland Company.³ Such merchants might also join the Fellowship of Merchant Adventurers of Newcastle, and if they wished to trade to certain areas they would have to belong in addition to the Merchant Adventurers of England.

Until the seventeenth century, the development of the merchant body in York was in many ways similar to that in Newcastle. The York society had a long history going back certainly to 1356 and probably earlier than that.⁴ It kept a record of its members from 1420 and it obtained royal recognition in 1430 as the Gild of Mercers of York. The York society, like the one at Newcastle,

¹ F. W. Dendy, *op. cit.*, i, xxxiii, xxxiv.

² F. W. Dendy, *op. cit.*, ii, xvii.

³ F. W. Dendy, *op. cit.*, ii, xx, xxi.

⁴ For the history of the York Society, see Maud Sellers, *The York Mercers and Merchant Adventurers, 1356-1917* (Surtees Society, vol. CXXIX).

had a large number of members who belonged to the Merchant Adventurers of England and it acted in some measure as a provincial branch of the national organization even though it came in conflict with it on a number of points. Not all of its members, however, were Merchant Adventurers of England, and it thus possessed that dual nature which has already been noted in the Newcastle society. In 1580 it was incorporated as the Society of Merchant Adventurers of York and by the charter its Governor was always to be a member of the Merchant Adventurers of England, but its links with the national organization weakened, and, as Mr Bernard Johnson has recently shown,¹ there came into existence at some date between 1580 and 1664 a York Residence or branch of the Society of Merchant Adventurers of England separate and distinct from the Society of Merchant Adventurers of York. The minutes of this branch have been preserved for the period 1693-1815, but it certainly existed much earlier than 1693 and there are some indications that it may have been set up in the sixteen-thirties. Members of the York Residence also belonged to the Merchant Adventurers of York, but the two were separate organizations serving different purposes, and the national society now controlled its York members through its own branch and not, as hitherto, through the larger organization of York merchants. In York, as in Newcastle, there was also a local branch of the Eastland Company, and in the seventeenth century the York deputy of the Eastland Company was with few exceptions the governor of the Society of Merchant Adventurers of York,² so that the three separate organizations of merchants were in some measure linked with each other.

In Hull there were two separate merchant bodies. One was the Governor, Assistants and Fellowship of the Merchants inhabiting in the town of Kingston upon Hull, and the other was the local branch of the Merchant Adventurers of England. The majority of the members of the Fellowship also belonged to the Merchant Adventurers, but the two societies were distinct and used separate seals.³ At Exeter there was a Company of Merchant Adventurers trading to France, but it was not a branch

¹ Bernard Johnson, "The York Residence of the Company of Merchant Adventurers of England", published by the Yorkshire Architectural and York Archaeological Society in a volume entitled *The Last of the Old Hanse*.

² Maud Sellers, *op. cit.*, p. 305.

³ *Charters and Letters Patent Granted to Kingston upon Hull*. Translated by J. R. Boyle, Hull, 1905, pp. 90-97; Charles Frost, *Notices Relative to the Early History of the Town and Port of Hull*, 1827, p. 36, note 2.

of the national society.¹ There were, however, a number of members of the Merchant Adventurers of England in Exeter, and during at least part of the seventeenth century they had their own Residence there.²

In Bristol, however, the situation was very different from that examined above. The Bristol merchants had no connection either as individuals or as a society with the Merchant Adventurers of England.³ Their charter in 1552 expressly excluded them from the markets in which that Society enjoyed a monopoly. Their trade did not normally take them to the Netherlands or North Germany, and in the seventeenth century they fell foul of the monopolies claimed by the Levant Company, the French Company, the Spanish Company, the East India Company and the African Company rather than of that claimed by the Merchant Adventurers of England. The attack on the Merchant Adventurers' monopoly made by west-country merchants in the seventeenth century was associated with Exeter and other western towns rather than with Bristol,⁴ and although the monopoly of the Merchant Adventurers of England was included in the list of reasons for the decay of trade which Bristolians presented to the Privy Council in 1621,⁵ this illustrated the general hostility of the outports to London monopolies rather than a particular grievance of the Bristol merchants.

There was, however, one occasion during the century when the Bristol Society did come in conflict with the Merchant Adventurers of England. The Society's charter of 1643 opened to its members the areas controlled by the Levant Company, the Eastland Company, the Russia Company and the Merchant Adventurers of London, and after the Restoration the Bristol Society tried to make good against the Levant Company the rights granted in the charter.⁶ The Levant Company resisted its efforts, and in

¹ For the Charter of the Exeter merchants, see W. Cotton, *An Elizabethan Guild of the City of Exeter*, pp. 1-10.

² Bernard Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 17, 21, 38; *Cal. S.P.D. 1637-1638*, p. 176.

³ Neither John Wheeler, Secretary of the Merchant Adventurers, nor the Governor of the Merchant Venturers in 1602, include Bristol in the list of towns where Merchant Adventurers lived. John Wheeler, *Treatise of Commerce* (1601), pp. 19-20; *Cal. S.P.D. 1601-1603*, p. 164. C. Gross, *Gild Merchant I*, 151, claims that there were members of the Merchant Adventurers living in Bristol, but his reference does not support his statement.

⁴ *Cal. S.P.D. 1637-1638*, p. 164. See also F. W. Dendy, *Extracts from the Records of the Merchant Adventurers of Newcastle-upon-Tyne*, II, xv.

⁵ B. M. Hargrave MSS., 321, fos. 103-107. I am indebted for this reference to Mr. J. D. Gould.

⁶ See pp. 218-220, nos. 439-441.

the course of the struggle secured the support of the Merchant Adventurers of England who alleged that the merchants of Bristol were intruding also into the trade of North Germany. They offered to accept Bristolians as members for a fee of twenty marks per head, but the Bristol Society would not accept the offer and maintained that it would involve considerable expense and inconvenience for Bristolians.¹ While the suit with the Levant Company and the Merchant Adventurers of England was still before the Council in 1669, the Bristol representative in London suggested to the representative of the Newcastle Merchant Adventurers that now was the time for Bristol, Exeter and Newcastle to free themselves from the bondage of the Merchant Adventurers of England. The Newcastle representative suggested unkindly, but probably truthfully, that this was merely a move on the part of Bristol to get the other outports to share in the expenses of its suit before the Council, and the Newcastle Society decided to form a common front with London against the Bristol interlopers.² Bristol's real quarrel at this time was undoubtedly with its ancient enemy the Levant Company, and the proposal for a joint attack on the Merchant Adventurers of England was probably merely the by-product of the main dispute. It was occasioned by the fact that the Merchant Adventurers of England had come to the support of the Levant Company, and it was a tactical move rather than a major plan of campaign against the Merchant Adventurers of England.

Latimer suggests that Bristolians succeeded in breaking the monopoly of the Merchant Adventurers of England,³ but in fact that monopoly went on until after the Revolution of 1688, and its destruction then did not greatly interest Bristol since Bristol merchants were not for the most part concerned with the markets controlled by the Merchant Adventurers of England.

8. *The commercial policy of the Society and relations with other companies*

The commercial policy of the Bristol merchants in the seventeenth century must be seen against the background of a nationwide debate on how foreign trade should be organized. The points at issue were numerous. Was foreign trade to be open

¹ P.R.O., S.P. 29/267, no. 44, and S.P. 29/268, no. 78(1).

² See pp. 225-227, no. 446.

³ J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, p. 140.

to all, or was it to be limited to recognized merchants? Were all foreign markets to be open to those who wished to trade, or were some to be limited to particular groups of traders? If trade was to be controlled, was its control to be vested in regulated or joint-stock companies? What contributions, if any, were to be levied in order to maintain the services necessary for the smooth working of trade? If privileges were granted to particular corporations, what steps were to be taken to protect the rights of others? These were some of the questions discussed passionately, and by no means disinterestedly, by all who traded overseas, and a number of pressure groups, of which the Bristol Society of Merchant Venturers was one, sought continually to move in one direction or another the frontiers of economic controls, each striving to catch the ear of Council and Parliament, each fighting for its own interests but justifying its position on grounds of national well-being, adapting its policy and arguments to the needs of the moment and not worrying unduly about consistency.

The volume of foreign trade based on London was overwhelmingly greater than that of the provincial towns and certain companies in which Londoners predominated managed to secure privileges in a number of important markets. These companies tended either to exclude outsiders or, more usually, to impose on them conditions of trade, which they found irksome. Thus seventeenth-century disputes on trade policy were in no small measure disputes between London and the outports. Bristolians were naturally heavily engaged in these debates and fought with distinction on a number of different fronts. They contributed in good measure to the volume of complaints from the provinces against the dominant Londoners. At the end of the sixteenth century, for example, they protested that whereas once they had "free and unrestrained traffique into the streights", now "This our Trade have the Londoners intercepted and soe monopolized unto themselves, as wee are inforced (yf wee trade thither) to Compound therefore at verie neere a quarter parte";¹ in 1620 they protested against "the practizes and projectes of some merchants of London to obtain control of the trade in Shrewsbury cottons and rasins", remarking "it were superfluous to remember you that these dissignes are Contrary to the lawes of the kingdome, the benifitt of the Comonwealth, the increase of his Maiesties Customes, humane Society, yea against the Rules of Christianity" and they commended their representative's "vertuous Resolucion

¹ *Book of Trade*, p. 136. For other complaints, *ibid.*, 136-138.

to oppose and Crushe in the shell these cacatrisés".¹ On another occasion they remarked that a London merchant who had an interest in a patent to export butter was behaving "as if god had noe sonnes to whome he gave the benefitt of the earth but in London".² Many other examples of their attitude towards London monopolies can be found in their records, but the fullest development of their arguments is seen in their case against the Levant and Hamburg³ Companies in 1669 when they maintained that free trade would lead to an increase in national wealth and that it was in the interests of the state to maintain a proper balance between the different parts of the kingdom.⁴

This policy of opposition to London-dominated companies found practical application in the calculated withdrawal of Bristol merchants from the Spanish Company in 1605;⁵ in the opposition to the French Company;⁶ in the long dispute with the Levant Company;⁷ in the hostility to the London soap monopoly⁸ and to the London vintners' control of the wine trade in the sixteen-thirties;⁹ in the quarrel with the Levant and Hamburg Companies after the Restoration;¹⁰ in the unsuccessful attempt to break in on the East India monopoly¹¹ and in the ultimately successful attack on the Royal African Company.¹²

Opposition to London companies played a big part in the commercial policy of many provincial towns in the seventeenth century, but it would be an over-simplification of a complex issue to regard these struggles merely as one of under-privileged outports against an over-privileged London. Neither London nor the outports presented a united front. London merchants were ready to solicit provincial help for an attack on the Royal African Company in 1694,¹³ and earlier on Bristolians had joined forces with their former enemy the Levant Company in an attempt to get a share in the monopoly of the East India Company.¹⁴ In the sixteen-thirties the Exeter merchants were enthusiastic supporters of the Londoners in a joint effort to get control of the French

¹ See p. 220, no. 442.

² *Book of Trade*, p. 83 (1621).

³ The Merchant Adventurers of England came to be known as the Hamburg Company.

⁴ See p. 19, no. 22.

⁵ See p. 3, no. 2.

⁶ See pp. 207-212.

⁷ See pp. 213-220.

⁸ J. Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, pp. 121-122.

⁹ See pp. 221-225.

¹⁰ See pp. 218-220, 225-227.

¹¹ See pp. 228-231.

¹² See pp. 231-233.

¹³ See p. 232, no. 455.

¹⁴ See p. 228, no. 448.

trade,¹ and in the post-Restoration period the merchants of Newcastle rejected Bristol's proposal for an attack on the Merchant Venturers of England and hastened to defend a monopoly in which they themselves shared.² Each town was concerned with its own particular interests rather than with general principles.

While it is true that Bristol merchants were anxious to preserve their independence of outside control, there is no doubt that one of the most powerful factors in their opposition to London-controlled companies was financial. A number of companies to which Bristolians took exception were quite willing to admit provincial members, provided they paid the usual fees for the privileges of membership. Many Bristol merchants did in fact join the Spanish Company and they withdrew only because Common Council ordered them to do so. The constitution of the French Company made provision for provincial members in what was intended to be a national organization.³ If Bristolians did not join, it was because they did not choose to do so. The Levant Company was also open to them and some did join.⁴ Moreover, in return for a composition fee to help pay the expenses of maintaining the trade, the Bristol Merchant Venturers obtained certain trading rights in the area included in that Company's monopoly.⁵ In the post-Restoration period, both the Levant Company and the Merchant Adventurers of England were willing to admit Bristolians on favourable terms, but Bristol rejected the offer.⁶ Again, there was nothing in the constitutions of the East India Company or the Royal African Company which prevented Bristolians from buying shares when they came on the market, although there were certain practical difficulties. Opposition to all these companies was to a large extent opposition not to monopolies from which Bristol merchants were excluded but to monopolies in which they could participate only if they paid their share of the costs. It is significant that in the sixteen-thirties

¹ See pp. 209-212, nos. 430, 431.

² See pp. 225-227, no. 446.

³ C. T. Carr, *Select Charters of Trading Companies* (Selden Society, vol. xxviii), pp. 62-78. Members from many provincial towns were named in the Charter, but there were none from Bristol.

⁴ *Book of Trade*, pp. 205-206, for a letter from the Levant Company to the Bristol Society stating that "some of you are members of our Cmpenie and haue taken oath to bee observant of our orders". 19 May 1632.

⁵ See pp. 213-217, nos. 433-438.

⁶ P.R.O., S.P. 29/267, no. 44 and S.P. 29/268, no. 78(i).

Bristolians were alone among the western merchants in their prolonged opposition to a levy on the merchants which the others considered necessary to re-establish the French trade on a satisfactory basis;¹ and when Parliament passed a bill opening the African trade at the end of the century, the merchants of Bristol carried their opposition to the House of Lords, not because they opposed the opening of the trade, but because they strongly objected to paying a tax of ten per cent. which Parliament considered necessary to maintain proper trading facilities.² They wanted trade to be free and they took little account of the argument that certain necessary services could be maintained only if the merchants as a whole were willing to pay for them.

The arguments used by the Bristol merchants might give the impression that they were enlightened champions of economic freedom, but their policy was in fact only the very natural one of opposing controls that they found irksome. They had no objection to controls which worked to their advantage. They fought hard to exclude retailers from foreign trade,³ they tried to get their Charter excepted from the act opening the French, Spanish and Portuguese trades to all the king's subjects,⁴ and they made sporadic efforts to secure for themselves a complete monopoly in Bristol's overseas commerce. They were quite ready to share in monopolies in the export of butter and calf-skins,⁵ and they were ardent supporters of controls like the Navigation Acts and the prohibition of the growing of English tobacco.⁶ If they seemed to be advanced free traders in their opposition to certain monopolies in foreign trade, it must be remembered that in this field they had no monopoly of their own to defend. They would probably not have been so enthusiastic in their opposition to trade monopolies if they had, for instance, been shareholders in the East India Company or the Royal African Company or if they had formed a provincial branch of a monopolistic West India Company. As things were, the policy they followed was simply the one their interests demanded.

¹ See pp. 209-212, nos. 429-431.

² See p. 233, no. 457, and note 2.

³ See pp. xii-xiv, xvi-xviii, I, 35.

⁴ See p. 6.

⁵ See pp. 118-128.

See pp. 245-246, 250, 255-256, 258, 259, nos. 471, 472, 473, 481, 489, 490, 493, 497.

9. *The work of the Society in seventeenth-century Bristol*

The Society of Merchant Venturers of Bristol in the seventeenth century was a voluntary organization of merchants bound together by economic and social interests and undertaking in addition to the normal work of a private association certain public duties which at other times would have been the responsibility of the municipality or the state. As its records show, its activities ranged over a very wide field, and only some aspects of its work can be commented on here.

To the individual member, the Society offered a number of advantages both in his business and in his social life. He could look to his fellow members for assistance at home and abroad, he could share in certain trade privileges and he was exempt from wharfage duties on outgoing cargoes. If he came in conflict with government officials, he could often obtain a measure of legal and financial aid. If he fell on evil days or died in reduced circumstances, he or his dependants might obtain help from the Society. Members could share in the Society's entertainments and enjoy the prestige of belonging to a powerful and important organization. They must, one imagines, have been in a position to make useful contacts and to obtain inside information, and their Society possessed an accumulated experience of commerce of the sort that enabled the Merchant Adventurers of England to flourish long after they had lost their monopoly.

High among the Society's many contributions to the growth of seventeenth-century Bristol was its work in developing the city's maritime life. The building of new quays, the improvement of the river, the supervision of pilots and harbour officials have been noted elsewhere.¹ In addition, the Society took steps to suppress piracy, and was very active in drawing the government's attention to the need for adequate convoys in time of war.²

Exploration and colonization also received attention, but the material results were small and the part played by the Society can easily be exaggerated. Some of its members were enthusiastic, but the Society itself was cautious and its enthusiasm for Captain James's expedition was exceptional, for generally speaking it showed a certain lack of enterprise in its attitude to the opening of new markets. Its rejection of the East India Company's offer in 1650,³ though understandable, indicated a certain reluctance

¹ See Section IX.

² See pp. 176-198.

³ See p. 228.

to take risks even when the prize was so well worth winning. The lost opportunity was never regained.

One very important aspect of the Society's work still survives to this day—its charitable activity. It maintained in its almshouse a number of old men and women to whom it gave pensions, it supported a schoolmaster to teach poor mariners' children and it made grants to clergy who visited its poor and who conducted services for sailors at the chapel in Shirehampton. Every year it made a large number of casual grants, particularly, but not exclusively, to those connected with the sea. Wives whose husbands had been killed, relatives anxious to redeem their loved ones from captivity among the Turks, decayed mariners, Protestant exiles from Ireland or from France, and merchants who had fallen on evil days, were among the many who petitioned for help, and although the amount spent on charity in any one year was limited, the Society undoubtedly made an important contribution to the social welfare of seventeenth-century Bristol.¹

The most important side of the Society's work from the point of view of the merchants lay in yet another direction—the defence of Bristol's commercial interests and the championship of its privileges against numerous competitors. In the first half of the century, Bristol merchants were much harassed by a government that was desperately anxious to raise money. Bristolians were not always the innocent victims they made themselves out to be, but they certainly suffered a measure of injustice, and the Society was a courageous and determined defender of their interest, even providing in the person of its warden Edmund Arrundel a local Hampden.² Later in the century, there was still need for continual vigilance against kings anxious to get money and against a Parliament that did not always give to Bristol the special consideration she considered her due. Throughout the century there were disputes with the London organizations, and on a hundred economic battlefields the Society kept the flag of Bristol flying to the benefit not only of its own members but of the whole trading community of the city.

In an age when many competing interests were striving to shape national economic policy for their own ends, it was essential for any group that wanted to make its influence felt to be wide awake to what was going on both in public and behind the scenes, and

¹ See pp. 96–117.

² See pp. 240–242, no. 467.

to take steps to see that its point of view was not only effectively stated but that it received support from those who were in a position to shape public policy. Provincial merchants were at an obvious disadvantage compared with their London rivals who were so conveniently situated for influencing the Court and Parliament, but the Society of Merchant Venturers of Bristol was fully aware of the need to be well represented in the Capital, and its financial resources and its fund of experience enabled it to put the case for Bristol much more effectively than could individual merchants.

The Society's records provide ample evidence of the trouble it took in preparing its evidence and in seeing that its members' needs were made known to those in authority. The business of formulating demands, collecting evidence and organizing complaints rested to a considerable extent in the hand of the officers of the Society but great use was made of committees and from time to time all were invited to bring their suggestions and grievances to the Merchants' Hall. Legal advice was often sought in Bristol and in London, and for a time standing counsel was employed. Throughout the century the Society, acting sometimes on its own and sometimes in collaboration with the city government, sent a steady stream of petitions to the king, the Council, the government departments, and Parliament, pointing out, often in colourful or tearful language, the sufferings of the merchants and the fatal consequences to the nation if their demands were not granted. But the written word was not enough, and there was a need for representatives in London who could find out what was going on, solicit help from those likely to be useful, and act when necessary on their own initiative. For this purpose the Society made great use of the Bristol M.P.s who were more often than not members, and it also sent up on numerous occasions able and experienced men to act as special representatives. Men like John Whitson, John Barker, Sir John Knight and John Cary performed yeoman service on the Society's behalf, and the Society did not grudge the money needed to pay their considerable expenses. Useful contacts were made with men like Secretary Nicholas, Sir Robert Southwell and Secretary Bennett, and gifts such as the pipe of wine sent to the Lord High Steward of Bristol in 1618, the marmalade and succades presented to the Lord Chief Baron in 1624, and the £20 given to Edward Cranfield one of the king's gentlemen ushers in 1681 showed that the Society did not neglect one obvious seventeenth-century method of

getting things done. The granting of membership to Major-Generals Skippon and Harrison in 1651 and to the Marquis of Worcester in 1673 indicated that it was well aware of the value of friends in high places. By these and other means the Society established an effective machinery for influencing both the executive and the legislature and performed with great efficiency one of the most important duties of a merchant organization.

In the seventeenth century, Bristol recovered from the long decline of the sixteenth century and laid the foundations of her eighteenth-century commercial greatness. The reorganized Society of Merchant Venturers of Bristol had a major contribution to make to that recovery, and its work was all the more valuable because it was still at this time ready to welcome as members all genuine merchants and because it achieved its ends without imposing a strait-jacket on the economic development of the city as a whole.

THE RECORDS OF THE SOCIETY OF MERCHANT VENTURERS OF BRISTOL

I. *Some General Comments*

The Society of Merchant Venturers of Bristol received its first Charter in 1552, and a merchant organization existed in the city at an even earlier date. Yet it is a surprising fact that, with the exception of the Charters, the municipal Ordinances of 1500, the Grant of Arms, and a number of documents relating to property,¹ the Society has no records before the seventeenth century. In this respect, it is less fortunate than merchant organizations in a number of other towns.

The historian of the Society remarked that "At a period when the Corporation and even the small craft guilds kept a record of their proceedings, it is impossible to suppose that the transactions of a Society comprising the best educated and the most experienced business men in the city should have been less carefully preserved."² He thought that a possible explanation of the absence of early records was to be found in the Proceedings of Common Council for 15 January, 1641, when it was ordered that a letter should be sent to the Bristol M.P.s "... to seek reformation and redresse against such persons as by iniust informacions to his Majesty, or by their illegall and vnwarrantable proceedings haue iniured and abused the merchantes of this Citty and by entring into the merchantes hall taking away their book of accomptes and other writings. . . ."³

Latimer's suggestion may account for the absence of some of the records, but it is not a complete explanation, and it leaves a number of questions unanswered. Certain Commissioners had been appointed in November 1637 to inquire into sums alleged to have been levied illegally, since the beginning of James I's reign, on goods imported into Bristol, and when the Society refused to give them access to its books, they broke into the Merchants' Hall.⁴ It is important to remember, however, that the Commissioners were primarily interested in the merchants'

¹ The isolated account of 1583 found in *Treasurer's Book I* is strictly speaking a record of the Spanish Company. See pp. xiv, xv.

² J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, p. 58.

³ Bristol Record Office: C.C.P., 1627-1642, fo. 110; J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 58, 111.

⁴ For a summary of the merchants' statement, see *Cal. S.P.D. 1637-1638*; p. 168. For the Commissioners' statement, see pp. 240-242, no. 467.

accounts, particularly those relating to wharfage which the Society was alleged to be collecting illegally. The entry in the Proceedings of Common Council does, it is true, refer to "other writings", but it is the "book of accomptes" that is mentioned by name. If the Commissioners had also seized a number of important early Minute Books, one might reasonably expect to find the fact noted in the complaint to the M.P.s or elsewhere in the records. Another fact of some significance is that the inventory of the Society's property and records made in 1631 does not suggest that there then existed a large number of early record books which have since disappeared.¹ The seizure of 1637 does not, in any case, explain the absence of records *after* that date. There is, for example, no record of apprentices before 1653, although the 1618 Ordinances ordered that an Apprentice Book should be kept. The surviving *Wharfage Books* do not begin until 1654, although three earlier volumes existed and were in the Society's hands as late as 1689²; and the gap in the *Treasurer's Books* between 1633 and 1646 cannot be explained entirely by the action of the Commissioners in 1637.

It is not known to what extent the early merchant organizations of Bristol kept proper records, nor what pains they took to preserve them. After its incorporation in 1552, the Society still had an unsettled half-century before it, and in that confused period when many merchants joined the Spanish Company, the Society's records may have fallen into private hands and have been lost. Even after the reorganization of 1605, the Society was slow to put its records in order, and it did not make a serious effort to do so until 1618. In that year it drew up a comprehensive body of ordinances, and made provision for the keeping of a number of records.³ It realized, apparently for the first time, the need to keep a Register of Members;⁴ and a *Book of Charters*,

¹ For the inventory, see p. 68-70, no. 126. The principal records listed there which have not been preserved are: a green ledger book, one of the two books of Acts, and the new wharfage book. The inventory may, however, have included only books then in use. There is no mention of older wharfage books although the duty had been collected since 1606.

² *Hall Book II*, 393, 7 February, 1689, refers to the taking out of the chest of "nineteene stiched bookes of acco^{ts}. of wharfage". There are now only sixteen wharfage books up to 29 September, 1689, and these run in a continuous series from May 1654. The three earlier volumes have evidently been lost since 1689.

³ These included a Register of all the Acts of the Court; a Register of Apprentices; and a confidential Register of the names of members accused of breaking the Ordinances.

⁴ *Book of Charters I*, 61.

Ordinances and Acts was drawn up containing copies of important documents and a list of Master and Wardens since 1605. The first *Treasurer's Book* also dates from 1618.¹ One is left with the impression that hitherto the Society had been rather casual in the keeping of records.

In connection with the preservation of records, an Ordinance of 4 April, 1639, is of interest. It was one of the additions made to the Ordinances of 1618, and it stated "That the Clerke of this Societie shall forthwith bring into the Hall, and deliver to the Wardeins, All bookes, Copies of writings, Coppies of letters, and all other papers whatsoever, that may in any way concerne This Company, That the same may bee laide vpp amongst theire other Writings, And from hencefourth Theire saide Clarke shall not make any writings, or enter any Actes or Orders that concernes this Company in any other place then in the Common Hawle, called the Marchantes Hawle, vnlesse hee shall haue leave from the Maister and Wardeins. . . ."² This suggests that previously some of the records had been kept by the Clerk in his private custody. It is possibly significant that the first of the surviving *Hall Books* begins shortly after this order.³

The problem of the missing early records may never be solved. Some of them may still turn up among the Public Records if the Commissioners handed over to official custody those records they seized in 1637, but search has so far been fruitless. Others may have passed into private hands, but advertisements for them failed to produce results. Nevertheless, in spite of gaps, which are particularly serious for the years before 1639, there is a good deal of material available for the history of the Society in the seventeenth century.

2. *The Seventeenth-Century Records of the Society*

The following are the chief seventeenth-century records of the Society:

1. The Book of Trade.
2. The Merchants' Hall Books of Proceedings, three volumes, 1639-1670, 1670-1694⁴ and 1694-1708.

¹ See p. xv, note 3.

² *Book of Charters II*, 27-28.

³ The first entry in *Hall Book I* is dated 11 May, 1639, but on p. 5 there is a record of members admitted on 20 April, 1639.

⁴ The dates 1670-1693 appear on the cover, but by modern dating the book goes on to March 1694.

3. A Book of Charters, Ordinances and Acts (Book of Charters I).
4. A Book of Charters, Ordinances and Statutes (Book of Charters II).¹
5. The Treasurer's Books of Accounts, two volumes, 1583-1632 and 1646-1718.
6. The Beadle's Books, two volumes, 1686-1709 and 1696-1725.
7. The Register of Members' Apprentices.
8. The Wharfage Books, twenty volumes, 1654-1694.
9. A Book of Abstracts of Leases, etc.
10. The Merchants' Hall Almshouse Book, 1695-1719.
11. Miscellaneous documents, including the Charters, leases, etc.

The Book of Trade

The *Book of Trade* is a handsome leather-bound volume measuring 15 inches by 9.5 inches with the words *Book of Trade 1598 to 1693* inscribed on the spine in gold lettering on a red background. The earliest document, which appears second in order in the book, is in fact a copy of a letter from the Privy Council to the Mayor and Aldermen of Bristol dated 5 October, 1595, and the last entry is simply a note that the book was produced in the Exchequer in January 1693. It was not used as a record book after 1666.

At one end of the volume there is an index of eight pages followed by twenty-seven blank pages. Then come some 200 entries on pages numbered from 36 to 265. The first nine documents cover the years 1595 to 1613. They are followed by fifty entries for the period 1618 to 1621. There are a fair number of documents for the years 1622-1625, and after that, very few until 1631. They become more frequent up to 1634, after which there is an almost blank patch until the period 1639-1642. After 1642 all that remains in this part of the book is two documents for September 1648, and a little collection of entries concerning the Levant Company in 1665-66.

At the other end of the volume there is a list of wharfage rates in 1620, an account of money raised for the expedition against Turkish pirates in 1619-20, the names of the Society's feoffees in 1621, and a copy of the Grant of Arms. This is followed by thirty-two blank pages, and then come copies of the Society's Accounts from 1611 to 1630.

¹ Both Books of Charters have long descriptive titles, but it is convenient to refer to them as *Book of Charters I* and *Book of Charters II*.

MERCHANT VENTURERS OF BRISTOL xlix

The *Book of Trade* is primarily a letter book and a memorandum book. It contains copies of letters, agreements, bonds, patents, proclamations, certificates and other records necessary for the efficient conduct of the Society's affairs. The Society's correspondents included the Privy Council, various Ministers of State, the Board of Green Cloth, the Farmers of the Customs, the Levant Company, the London Vintners, the Bristol M.P.s and several agents whom the Society sent to represent it in London. There are documents dealing with the expedition against the Turkish Corsairs in 1621;¹ with colonization schemes in America from 1621-1623;² with voyage of exploration of the *Henrietta Maria*;³ with the Levant Company's attempts to restrict Bristol's mediterranean trade,⁴ and with the London Vintners' interference with the wine trade.⁵ There is a great deal about the patents for the export of butter and calf-skins in which the Society was interested,⁶ and numerous references to disputes over purveyance, customs fees, and taxes on wine. Other documents relate to pirates, convoys, ships lost at sea, wharfage, pilots and lightermen; and the correspondence throws much light on the commercial policy of Bristol, particularly in relation to the London Companies.

The Books of Charters

Among the Society's records are two volumes which can be conveniently referred to as *Book of Charters I* and *Book of Charters II*. They were begun in 1618 and 1639 respectively, years in which the Society drew up comprehensive new Ordinances.

Book of Charters I is a leather-bound volume of 347 pages measuring 12.5 inches by 8 inches. The early part contains an inventory of the Society's property in 1631; extracts in translation from the Charter granted to Bristol by Edward III in 1373; the ordinances for the merchants of 1467; an extract in translation from the Charter granted to Bristol by Henry VII in 1499; the ordinances for the merchants drawn up by the City in 1500; translations of the letters patent granted to the Society by Edward VI and Elizabeth, and a copy of the Act of Parliament of 1566 confirming these patents. The Society's revised Ordinances of 1618 are set out on pages 69-82.

The book was also intended to be a record of the chief officers of the Society and a yearly chronicle of notable events in its history from 1605. The names of the Master, Wardens and Treasurer

¹ See pp. 182-187.

² See p. 199.

³ See p. 199.

⁴ See pp. 213-218.

⁵ See pp. 221-225.

⁶ See pp. 118-127.

from that date are given year by year up to 1768, and from 1620 the names of the Assistants were also included. There are a number of interesting notes on the Society's activities between 1605 and 1626, but after that, such notes are rare.

Book of Charters I was also used as a Register of Members. There is a complete list of members on 17 November, 1618, and the names of new members were then recorded year by year until 1765.¹

Book of Charters II measures 14 inches by 8.5 inches. It is bound in reversed calf and has the words *Merchants Hall Book of Charters* inscribed on the spine in gold letters on a red background. It covers the period 1639-1765 and contains 373 pages, of which 185 pages deal with the seventeenth century. The early part of the book contains a Record of Benefactors; the oaths of the Officers; the ordinances of 1639; a translation of Charles I's Charter of the same year; and a copy of a 1647 deed concerning the Hall. Documents and correspondence relating to the post-Restoration attempts to enlarge the Charters throw a good deal of light on the Society's commercial policy.² Miscellaneous entries include copies of commissions of inquiry relating to the docks; correspondence concerning the Society's efforts to secure the wine licences in the city; letters about convoys; regulations for shipping in the port; extracts from the wills of benefactors; an agreement relating to porters' wages; and a couple of loyal addresses to James II.³ The names of those approved as pilots by the Society are recorded from 1670. The book is not of much value for the period 1684-1700, but it contains a great deal of useful material for the eighteenth century.

*The Merchants' Hall Books of Proceedings*⁴

The earliest surviving *Hall Book* or Minutes Book is a volume measuring 12.8 inches by 8.6 inches bound in reversed calf and marked on the spine in gold letters on a red background *Merchants Hall Book of Proceedings No. 1 1639 to 1670*. It goes from 11 May, 1639, to 11 October, 1670. Volumes II and III are slightly smaller but have similar bindings and markings. They cover the years 1670 to 1694 and 1694 to 1708. Volume I has 498 numbered pages, of which 465 have been used, and volume II has 550 pages all of which have been used. The pages of volume III have not been

¹ See pp. 26-33.

² See pp. 18-24.

³ References to political events are extremely rare in the Society's seventeenth-century records.

⁴ The seventeenth-century volumes have been referred to as *Hall Book I* *Hall Book II*, *Hall Book III*.

numbered,¹ but it has 178 pages dealing with the seventeenth century. There are thus some 1,200 pages of minutes for the years 1639-1699, an average of just under twenty pages a year.

The *Hall Books* record those multifarious activities, great and small, with which the Society was concerned, and the extracts printed below give some idea of the range of topics which appear in these minutes.

The lists of members of the Society written out by the Clerk before the meeting of each General Court are useful for showing the size of membership at any particular period. The *Hall Books* also record the admission of new members and the terms on which they were admitted, and they contain a fine collection of members' signatures.² The names of apprentices were also recorded from 1685.

The Treasurer's Books of Accounts

There are two Treasurer's Account Books for the seventeenth century. The first is a large leather-bound volume, measuring 18 inches by 11.5 inches, strengthened with three thongs stitched to the cover and secured with a metal fastening. This is the oldest of the Society's record books. John Barker's signature appears on the first page, and the first account is one of the Company of Merchants of Bristol trading to Spain and Portugal made in 1583 by the Treasurer John Barker.³ It is an account of the Bristol branch of the Spanish Company, not an account of the Society of Merchant Venturers of Bristol. After 1583, the book was not used again for thirty-five years, and the second entry in it is Andrew Charlton's account of the Society's finances for the year 1617-18. The accounts then continue yearly up to 1632-33. The rest of the book is blank except for a record of receipts and expenditure in connection with the expedition against the Turkish pirates in 1619-20 (pp. 131v, 132).

The second Treasurer's Account Book is a volume measuring 12.1 inches by 8.2 inches bound in reversed calf and marked on the spine in gold lettering on a red background *Merchants Hall Treasurer's Book of Accounts 1646 to 1718*.⁴ At the back of the book, and bound up with it, is a duplicate set of accounts for the years 1681-82 to 1718-19.

The Treasurer's Books do not contain any of the Society's

¹ For the purposes of reference, I have assumed that the first page on which writing appears is page one and the other pages have been given numbers accordingly.

² Until 1685, all members present signed the book. See p. 64, no. 113.

³ See p. 81, no. 163.

⁴ The last account is for the year 1718-19.

accounts before 1617-18 or between 1633 and 1646. Moreover, the accounts from 1646 are fragmentary and do not return to normal until 1658-59. These gaps are partially filled by the accounts in the *Book of Trade* which run from 1610-11 to 1630.¹

The Treasurer's Accounts are straightforward statements of items of receipt and expenditure. The earlier ones contain a great deal more detail than the later ones which often refer to payments "as per note" or "as per order" without giving details.² They do not give a complete picture of the Society's finances, as certain sums were handled by the Beadle whose accounts have not survived before 1686, but they do enable us to form some general idea of the Society's financial position and they supply much interesting detail concerning the Society's work.

The Beadle's Books

The earliest surviving *Beadle's Books* consist of two volumes³. The first measures 12·4 inches by 7·9 inches and has on the spine the inscription *Beadles Book No. 1686 to 1709*. It contains ninety-eight pages dealing with the seventeenth century. The second book covers the years 1696 to 1723. Its seventeenth-century accounts are simply a duplicate of those in the earlier volume, but it contains in addition a list of rents due from property in Bristol and Clifton from 25 March, 1687.

The Beadle's Accounts supplement those of the Treasurer and contain a good deal of miscellaneous information about the Society's rents and its expenditure on charity, building, entertainments and other activities.

The Wharfage Books

The *Wharfage Books* were the volumes in which the Society's agents recorded receipts from the wharfage duties which the Society was empowered to collect. The duties were charged originally only on goods coming into the port and were paid by burgesses and non-burgesses alike. In 1667 persons not free of the Society were also required to pay duties on outward-bound goods, and the accounts begin to distinguish between *wharfage inwards* and *wharfage outwards*.

Although wharfage was first imposed in 1606, the accounts do not begin until 4 May, 1654. The series then continues unbroken until 29 September, 1694, but the volumes for the last years of

¹ See p. xlviii.

² Vouchers have survived for the eighteenth- but not for the seventeenth-century accounts.

³ Referred to as *Beadle's Book I* and *Beadle's Book II*.

the century are missing. For the period 1654-1694, there are twenty volumes of *Wharfage Books* varying in size and containing over 4,000 pages of entries.

The *Wharfage Books* give details of goods imported into Bristol, the names of the ships in which they came, and the names of the merchants who paid the duty. The entries from 1654-1661 usually give in addition the ports from which the ships came, but unfortunately later entries do not generally give this information. The *Wharfage Books* closely resemble the *Port Books*¹ and have the advantage over them that they are in an unbroken series from 1654-1694. As a source of information concerning Bristol's exports, they are less useful since wharfage outwards was paid only by non-members of the Society and the accounts do not give details of commodities.² For statistics concerning exports it is necessary to use the *Port Books*.³

The *Wharfage Books* also contain information about receipts from anchorage; and for the three years 1683-84, 1684-85 and 1685-6 they contain lists of all ships paying the duty, the names of their masters and the ports from which the ships came.

The Merchants' Hall Almshouse Book

A volume known as the *Merchants Hall Almshouse Book no. 1 1695 to 1719* contains a number of accounts relating to Edward Colston's Almshouse on St. Michael's Hill for which a number of Merchant Venturers acted as trustees. It is of interest from the point of view of the history of that institution rather than from that of the Society.

The Apprentices Book

The *Apprentices Book* measures 12·4 inches by 8 inches. It is bound in skin and marked on the spine in gold lettering on a red background *Society of Merchants Register of Members Apprentices*. It begins with a note of an apprenticeship entered into on 10 November, 1653,⁴ and ends with one of 18 September, 1930, but it is not a continuous register between those dates. There is, for example, only one entry between 1781 and 1850. Some comments on the evidence provided by the *Apprentices Book* are made elsewhere.⁵

¹ The *Port Books* in the P.R.O. give details of imports, exports and coastal trade, but there are a large number of gaps in the Bristol *Port Books* for the seventeenth century.

² See p. 174, no. 377.

³ It is hoped to give a number of statistics based on *Port Books* and *Wharfage Books* in the next volume.

⁴ The second entry is dated 18 March, 1651/2.

⁵ See p. 34.

The Book of Abstracts of Leases

This is a volume measuring 12.5 inches by 7.8 inches bound in skin. It is marked *No. 1* on the front cover and has an inscription which is not fully legible. It was begun in the seventeenth century and contains 175 pages dealing with that period. It contains abstracts of leases and miscellaneous agreements, and gives useful information about the Society's property in Clifton and elsewhere.

Miscellaneous documents

Other documents in the Society's records include the originals of the Charters¹ of 1552, 1563, 1639, 1643 and 1665, and a charter granted by Elizabeth to the city in 1558 giving certain privileges with regard to the hours at which goods might be loaded and unloaded in the port. The Society also has the original copy of the Ordinances for the Merchants made by the City in 1500 and bearing the City's seal, and the Grant of Arms made by the College of Heralds in 1569.

The Society has a large number of boxes containing deeds and miscellaneous agreements. These documents include the grant, made by the City in 1493, of the land on which the Hall and Almshouse subsequently stood.² There is a modern schedule of the deeds, which are too numerous to list here.

The Society appears to have no other collection of records relating to the seventeenth century except a number of papers at present contained in a box marked "Bristol Dock Act 1766". These include a number of documents relating to the dispute with the Searcher and two files of depositions of witnesses in connection with that dispute.

Latimer's Calendar of Records

In 1897 John Latimer made for the Society a manuscript *Calendar of Records* of which volume I covers the period 1467-1700. It is a history of the Society rather than a systematic examination and summary of its records, and although it is still of value, it is very selective in its subject-matter and does not make full use of all the records.

Other documents relating to the Society

There are, of course, a great many documents relating to the Society and its members in other repositories and some of these documents are printed here, but the aim of this first volume is primarily to illustrate the nature of the Society's own records, and a consideration of other sources must be postponed till later.

¹ Strictly speaking they are letters patent.

² See pp. 66, 96.

NOTE ON TRANSCRIPTION AND ARRANGEMENT

The documents in this volume were written by a number of different writers who made use of a wide range of abbreviations. The handwriting is of varying quality, and the inconsistencies in seventeenth-century spelling make it difficult to produce a text that is an accurate representation of what the scribes intended, and at the same time easily legible. The original spelling has been reproduced as far as possible, but there is sometimes uncertainty, particularly with the letters n, v, u. There is not usually any distinction in the manuscripts between the letters I and J, but in the transcription the forms John, January, etc., have been used instead of Iohn, Ianuary, etc., and the initial letters ff have been printed as F.

Abbreviations have been extended where this can be done with reasonable certainty. The abbreviations w^{ch}, y^e, y^t, wth, yo^r and o^r appear throughout as which, the, that, with, your, and our; & has been printed as and. The contractions Mr., M^r., M^r, mr, m^r., m^r have been printed as Mr; and S^r., S^r, Sr, s^r., s^r, sr, have been standardized as Sir. Abbreviations used in signatures and copies of signatures have, however, been retained.

Difficulty in extending many contractions arises not from doubt as to what word was intended but from uncertainty as to the form of spelling that the writer wished to employ. A word often appears in a number of different spellings in the same document. The contraction m'chant may stand for merchant, or for marchant; m^r ch^t may represent merchant, marchant, merchannt, merchaunt, marchannt or marchaunt. M^r. may stand for Master or for Maister; coialty for cominalty or comminalty; ordynnce for ordynance, ordynnance, ordynaunce or ordynnaunce; and so on. In a number of instances, missing letters have been supplied in italics in the text, and the use of such italics is intended to indicate that the scribe has shown that he is using an abbreviation and that the missing letters have been supplied by the editor, simply in order to make the text easier to read. It seems more satisfactory to print *company*, *preacher*, *amounteth*, *mariners*, *Received*, *Lordshipps*, etc., than to pepper the text with an excessive number of contractions such as comp^a, p^r ch^r, amoth, m'in's, Rc^d, Lo^{pps}. It is not suggested that the scribe necessarily intended to spell such words in the way in which they are printed.

Seventeenth-century writers made frequent use of superior letters. Often, these represent abbreviations which can be extended with reasonable certainty, but on occasions it is not clear that the writer did intend to indicate that he was using an abbreviation. The use of superior letters seems sometimes to have been a meaningless habit. Thus it is unlikely that the form Mayo^r., which is frequently used, was really intended to stand for Mayour, and Manno^r. does not necessarily represent Mannour. Nevertheless, it has sometimes seemed advisable, for one reason or another, to retain the superior letters as they appear in the manuscript.

Punctuation has not been entirely modernized, but such alterations and additions have been made as seem desirable to assist legibility.

Headings added by the editor and anything not in the original text have been distinguished by use of a different type from that used for printing the main body of the documents. Entries in the margins, however, form part of the original, except for document numbers and page numbers.

No alteration has been made in the dates in the documents. In headings and footnotes, dates are given according to the Old Style so far as the day and month are concerned, but the year is taken to begin on 1st January and not on 25th March.

There must always be certain dangers involved in selecting extracts from a great body of records and grouping the extracts under certain selected headings. It is hoped that the account of the records given elsewhere and the use of cross-references will help in some measure to overcome these dangers; and an effort has been made to choose illustrations that will show both the general nature of the records themselves and the normal, as well as the less normal, aspects of the Society's activities.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES

Beadle's Book I, II	See p. lii.
Book of Charters I, II	See pp. xlix, l.
Book of Trade	See pp. xlviii, xlix.
Cal. S.P.D.	Calendar of State Papers Domestic.
C.C.P.	Common Council Proceedings, Bristol Record Office.
Hall Book I, II, III	See pp. l, li.
Latimer, <i>Merchant Venturers</i>	J. Latimer, <i>The History of the Society of Merchant Venturers of the City of Bristol</i> , Bristol, 1903.
Latimer, <i>Seventeenth Century Annals</i>	J. Latimer, <i>The Annals of Bristol in the Seventeenth Cen- tury</i> , Bristol, 1900.
Latimer, <i>Eighteenth Century Annals</i>	J. Latimer, <i>The Annals of Bristol in the Eighteenth Cen- tury</i> , Bristol, 1893.
Pat. Roll	Patent Rolls, Public Record Office.
P.R.O.	Public Record Office.
Register of Apprentices	See p. liii.
Trans. B.G.A.S.	<i>Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society.</i>
Treasurer's Book I, II	See pp. li, lii.
Wharfage Book	See pp. lii, liii.

I. CHARTERS, ORDINANCES, AND REGISTER OF MEMBERS

The Charters granted to the Society in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were printed by Latimer.¹ They are unfortunately too long to reproduce here, but their main provisions are noted in the Introduction.²

The chief Ordinances of the Society were drawn up in 1618, and were considerably amended and elaborated in 1639. They included detailed regulations concerning the Officers, the keeping of Courts, the admission of members, the conditions of apprenticeship, the conduct of factors, the collection of the Society's dues, the lading of ships, the behaviour of mariners, and relations between members and non-members. These too were printed by Latimer.³

The first document in this section illustrates the close connection of Bristol merchants with the Spanish Company in the opening years of the century.⁴ The ninety-seven Bristol merchants who were included in the new grant to that Company in 1605 formed, after the Londoners, the largest single group. The list of names is particularly interesting as the *Register* of Bristol Merchant Venturers does not begin until 1618.

The Order of Common Council of 31 December 1605 (no. 2), which instructed the Bristol merchants to separate from the Spanish Company and to organize themselves in a company of their own, constitutes a landmark in the development of the Society, for although its origins are earlier, it had henceforth an uninterrupted history.

Some of the documents in this section illustrate the determined efforts made by the Society to control the foreign trade of Bristol and to get its own powers confirmed and extended. Those who were not burgesses of Bristol were excluded from membership, and attempts were made to enforce the ancient city regulations restricting the sale of goods by strangers (nos. 13, 14, 16, 18, 19). At one time, the city authorities and the Society jointly tried to exclude from foreign trade all who were not members of the Merchant Venturers (nos. 4, 6). The Society was particularly anxious to prevent retailers meddling with the merchant's art (no. 11); and it also wished to increase its control over sailors and over boatmen bringing goods to Bristol by river (nos. 8, 9, 11). After the Restoration, it attempted to establish its claim to trade freely to the areas controlled by the Levant Company and the

¹ J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 39 ff.; 46 ff.; 106 ff.; 109 ff.

² See pp. xii-xiii, xviii-xxi.

³ J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 68-80, 98-105.

⁴ See pp. xiv-xvi.

Hamburg Company and no. 22 illustrates some of the arguments used by the merchants of the out-ports against the exclusive claims of the London Companies.

When it revised its Ordinances in 1618 (no. 6), the Society also drew up a list of members (no. 26). From that time, names of new members were regularly entered in the Society's *Register*. It will be seen that there were seventy-two members in 1618 as compared with ninety-seven Bristol merchants belonging to the Spanish Company in 1605. Between 1619 and 1699, the *Register* shows 317 admissions.¹ In the same period, the number of people admitted as merchants to the freedom of Bristol was 521.² Clearly a considerable number of Bristol merchants for one reason or another did not join the Society.

1. BRISTOL MEMBERS OF THE SPANISH COMPANY, 31 MAY 1605

By letters patent of 31 May 1605,³ James I made a new grant of incorporation to the English merchants trading to Spain and Portugal. The patent stated that the Charters granted by Henry VIII⁴ and by Elizabeth,⁵ and confirmed by James himself on 30 March 1604, had been found imperfect; and a new grant was now made to 12 noblemen and officials; to 240 merchants from London; 97 from Bristol; 45 from Exeter; 40 from Totnes; and 122 merchants from 12 other ports. They were given a number of privileges and powers of control over the trade.⁶ The grant is too long to print in full here, but the names of the 97 Bristol merchants included in it are given below.

... William Vawer Alderman of our Cittye of Bristoll, William Cole, Sheriff of the said Cittye of Bristol, John Bolton, William Hopkines, Thomas Hopkins, William Hickes, William Ellys, John Hopkins, John Whitson, Thomas James, John Barker, Mathewe Havilande, Roberte Aldworthe, Abell Kytchin, John Fawnes,⁷ John Aldworthe, John Rowborrowe, John Robertes, Thomas

¹ *Hall Book I* records 26 admissions of members whose names do not appear in the *Register*. See Appendix A.

² A list, compiled from the City's *Burgess Books*, of those admitted as merchants to the freedom of the City in the seventeenth century can be found in N. C. P. Tyack, 'The Trade Relations of Bristol with Virginia', unpublished Bristol M.A. Thesis, 1930.

³ P.R.O., Pat. Roll., 3 James I, pt. 6, mm. 11-23.

⁴ P.R.O., Pat. Roll., 22 Henry VIII, pt. 2.

⁵ P.R.O., Pat. Roll., 19 Elizabeth, pt. 8.

⁶ C. T. Carr, *Select Charters of Trading Companies A.D. 1530-1707* (Selden Soc., vol. xxviii, 1913), pp. xxiv, xxv; V. M. Shillington and A. B. Wallis Chapman, *The Commercial Relations of England and Portugal*, pp. 146 ff.

⁷ Presumably John Fownes, sheriff 1601-2.

Aldworthe, Thomas Pitt, Henry Robertes, Lawrence Swetnam, Edward Morrice, Nicholas Hickes, Thomas Symondes, William Cole, in Cornestreete, John Browne, Roger Boman, Christopher Cary, John Sanford, John Angell, Roberte Johnson, Thomas Whiteheade, John Gittins, Edward Browne, John Woodde, Richard Barker, William Greves, Richard Poell,¹ Thomas Davie, Thomas Pitt Junior, George White in Cornestreete, Thomas Warden, Arthur Hibbine, Roberte Pentigrace, George Wilkins, Roger Hurte, Francis Doughtye, Walter Spurwaie, William Slack, Daniell Baker, John Barker the younger, Thomas Brambley, William Ellis, the younger, Roberte Havilande, Edmonde Gainsford, William Fleet, William Pitt, Thomas Anthony, George Gough, Sampson Lort, John Havyland, Thomas Walters, Phillippe Ellys, Walter Ellis, William Mellin, John Aires, Thomas Wrighte, Phillippe Dickinson, John Griffith, Thomas Powell sonne of Richard Powell, Thomas Leeke, Roberte Smithe, Roberte Sheward, William Angell, George White, John Guye, John Barnes, William Burrowes, John Gonninge, John Merrick, John Bindon, Christopher Webbe, Walter Thomas, Morgan Reade, William Colston, George Lane, Richard Tegge, Roberte Owen, Walter Owfeilde, Michael Quick, Edward Williams, John Langton, William Stanlack, Richard Winter, William Pinner, the younger, and Humfrey Fitzherbert merchantts of our Cittye of Bristol. . . .

The letters patent nominated as the first Assistants the Secretary of the Fellowship, 30 Londoners, and 30 merchants from the outports. The four Bristol Assistants were John Whitson, William Ellis, John Hopkins and Thomas James.

P.R.O., Pat. Roll, 3 James I, pt. 6. m. 12

2. ORDER OF COMMON COUNCIL REORGANISING THE BRISTOL MERCHANT ADVENTURERS, 31 DECEMBER 1605²

Invocatio Domus consilij vltimo Die Decembris Anno Domini p. 112
1605.

Thomas James Maior o ³	Franciscus Knighte
Willius Hickes Aldermanus o	Aldermanus o

¹ Richard Powell, mentioned later in the list.

² Printed in part by J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 63-64. He modernized the spelling.

³ The circles after the names are presumably intended to indicate that these members were present at the meeting.

Willius Parphey	Richardus George egr'
Aldermanus o	Willius Carye o
Johannes Webbe	Abel Kitchin o
Aldermanus o	Johannes Harrison o
Willius Ellis Aldermanus egr' ¹	Johannes Boulton o
John Hopkins Aldermanus o	Thomas Hopkins o
Willius Vawer Aldermanus o	Willius Hopkins o
Radulphus Hurte	Johannes Fownes o
Aldermanus o	Johannes Aldworth egr'
Johannes Whitson	Thomas Farmer o
Aldermanus o	Willius Barnes o
Christopherus Kedgwine	Georgius Richardes o
Aldermanus o	Willius Cole o
Johannes Rowbero	Georgius Harrington o
} o	Georgius White o
	Thomas Parker egr'
Johannes Guy	Johannes Robertes o
Johannes Barker o	Robertus Roger o
Richardus Smith o	Hugo Murcott o
Matheus Haviland o	Thomas Aldworth o
Thomas Pitcher extr' ³	Thomas Moore o
Johannes Butcher o	Willius Yoonge o
Robertus Aldworth o	Hugo Peard extr'
Johannes Eglesfeilde o	Arthurus Neades o

It is this day agreed that the merchauntes adventurers of the Cytie of Bristoll shall exempte themselves from the Companye and Governement of the merchanntes adventurers of London tradinge into Spayne and Portugall and that there shalbe a Companye of merchauntes adventurers of the Cytie of Bristoll contynued and established in the same Cytie of Bristoll to be ordered and governed amongst them selves by such Orders Constitucions and pollycyes as shalbe hereafter set downe and agreed on by the Mayo^r aldermen and Common Counsell of the said Cytie of Bristoll accordinge to the Charters of the said Cytie and by the Master Wardens Communitie and Corporacion of merchanntes within the said Cytie of Bristoll,⁴ And that every Burgesse of this Cytie which

¹ Indicates that he was absent owing to illness.

² Sheriffs.

³ Indicates that he was absent.

⁴ The words *and by the Master . . . Cytie of Bristoll* were omitted in Latimer's transcription, and they are obviously important.

ys or shalbe willinge and Desyerous to be of the sayd Company of *merchanntes* and to vse the trade of marchandyes shalbe admitted into the same Company payenge xx^s for a Fine to the vse of the same Company and geving over the exercise of all other trades occupacions and proffessions of gettinge his or theire Lyvinge. And all other *merchanntes* of the Cytie which are already Free of the same Company shall pay towards the Contribution of the same Company only vj^s viij^d. Provyded allwayes that any others which shall not be admytted into the sayd Company within the space of one yeare But shall be desyerous for to be admytted¹ after the space of one yeare nexte ensewinge, shall pay for his admyttannce as ys payd in lyke case in London, *Exception*² only such persons are or shalbe of the Common Counsell of the sayd Cytie of Bristoll which shall pay only xx^s and noe more to the vse of the sayd Company, at what time soever any such person beinge of the Common Counsell shalbe admytted into the sayd Company. And all the sonnes and apprentices of every free man of the sayd Company shall paye only vj^s viij^d for his admyttannce at any tyme hereafter beinge brought vppe in the trade of merchaundizes. And this day Mr William Hickes alderman ys chozen and appointed to be Treasurer for the said Company to receyve the Fynes and Contributions of the same Company.

And Mr John Hopkins, Mr William Vawer, and Mr John *p. 113* Whytson aldermen are appoynted to admitte any into the said Company that shalbe hereafter desyerous to be admytted accordinge to the present Ordynance.³

And every man to bringe in his Fine by the xvth of this moneth of Januuarye nexte.⁴ . . .

Mr Mathew Haveland	Mr John Butcher
Mr Roberte Aldworthe	Mr John Eglesfyeld
Mr John Rowberow	Mr William Carye
Mr John Aldworth	Mr Robert Rogers
Mr John Robertes	Mr Thomas Moore
Mr Thomas Aldworth	Mr Arthur Needes

appoynted Committees for the *merchauntes* Ordynances.⁵

¹ *for to be admytted* inserted above the line.

² *Except^a*. in the manuscript.

³ In the manuscript, this appears as *Ordynnce*, with a line over the last part indicating contraction. It can be extended in various ways.

⁴ Followed by eight lines referring to other matters.

⁵ *ordynnces* in the manuscript, with a line denoting contraction.

Mr John Hopkins Alderman appoynted Master of the Company of marchanntes

Mr William Vawer and	} Wardeins
Mr. John Whytson	

Willyam Fleete *merchante* appoynted Collector of the Fines and Contribucions of the Company of Marchanntes and to bringe the money to Mr William Hickes Treasurer.¹

C.C.P., 1598-1608, pp. 112, 113

3. BRISTOL AND THE BILL FOR FREE TRADE WITH SPAIN, PORTUGAL AND FRANCE, 1606²

27 February 1606

The Bill for free trade into Spayne, Portugall, and France brought in from the Committee by Mr Fuller, with a Proviso added, for such as are restrained to go beyond Sea without Licence; Bill, with the Proviso, to be ingrossed.

Another Proviso, for the Exception of a Charter to Bristoll. Both twice read: this latter not allowed, though twice read.

Mr Prowse moveth for another, for Exeter, of the like kind.

Journals of the House of Commons, I, 275

4. ACT OF COMMON COUNCIL RESTRICTING FOREIGN TRADE TO MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY, 18 APRIL 1612³

It is Consented by the mayor aldermen and Common Counsell that the master wardeins and Companye of *merchannte* adventurers

¹ The Master and Wardens appointed by Common Council were the same as those elected by the Society at a General Court on 7 May 1605, but the Treasurer was different. See p. 54, no. 93.

² The Bill became an Act in 1606. See *Statutes of the Realm*, iv. pt. ii. 1083. The object of the Bill was to open the Spanish, Portuguese and French trades to all the subjects of the English crown. The merchants of Bristol wished to have their Charter excepted from it, since their Charter excluded the retailers of Bristol from foreign trade. The merchants' attempt to get parliamentary support for their exclusive policy failed. The Charter of the Exeter merchants was, however, excepted from the Act, and this exception was confirmed by the statute 4 James I, c. ix. The Charter of the Exeter merchants expressly excluded non-members from the French trade.

³ The object of this was to limit foreign trade to members of the Society, excluding retailers and also merchants who were not members. J. Latimer (*Merchant Venturers*, p. 66) states that the ordinances were confirmed in the following August. This appears to be an error, as they were then merely referred to a Committee (see p. 7, no. 5). In fact the Corporation Minutes contain no record of a confirmation.

of Bristoll shall make an Ordynance¹ in their Hall by vertue of their Charter, that noe person which is or shalbe of their Companye, shall vse or exercise any other trade but onlye the trade of a merchannte adventurer Duringe suche tyme as he shal vse the trade of a merchante. Neyther shall any person vse the trade of a merchante adventurer within this Cytie but onlye such as ys or shalbe of the sayd Societye of marchantes adventurers. And that the sayd Master² and Companye shall presente the said Ordynance³ soe to be made to the mayo^r. Aldermen and Common Counsell to be Considered of and allowed.

C.C.P., 1608-1627, fo. 24v

5. COMMON COUNCIL AND THE MERCHANTS' ORDINANCES

18 August 1612

Mr Franncoys Knighte, Mr John Hopkins, Mr John Butcher, Mr Havilande, Mr Roberte Aldworthe, Mr Thomas Moore Committees to consider of the ordynances⁴ of the merchannte Adventurers of this Cytie and to Signifye their opynyons therein at the nexte assemblye of the Common Counsell.

C.C.P., 1608-27, fo. 25

6. ACT FOR REVISION OF THE ORDINANCES, 6 JULY 1618

An acte that the ordinannces and decrees of the societie of Marchantes Adventurers of the Citty of Bristoll shalbee perused, revised and put in execucion, and that noe person shalbee reputed to bee of the Company vnlesse hee bee first admitted in open Courte, and then entred into the Register of the saide Societie

Memorandum that att a generall Courte of the Maister, Wardeins and Commynaltie of the Arte or Misterie of marchanntes Aduenturers of the Citty of Bristoll houlden the sixte daie of Julie 1618. Yt is enacted and Ordeyned, that Mr John Barker nowe Maister of the saide Arte or Misterie, with the Assistance of Mr John Langton, Humfrye Hooke, Richard Holworthie, William Jones, Humfrey Browne and Thomas Colston, *merchantes*, shall peruse the Ordinannces and Lawes heretofore made for the Rule and governance of the saide Arte or Misterie: And shall collect

¹ *Ordynnce* with a line indicating contraction.

² *Mr* in the manuscript, standing for Master or Maister.

³ *ordynnce* with a line indicating contraction.

⁴ *ordynnce* with a line indicating contraction.

and gather such of the same Ordinances and lawes, and ordeyne and appointe other Ordinances and lawes for the better government of the Commynalty of the same Arte or Misterie, as to them shall seeme Convenient accordinge to the tyme and recourse of marchandice nowe vsed in the Citty of Bristoll: And for that expresse mention is made in and by the seuerall Ordinances Charters and letters pattentes grannted to the maister wardeyns and Comynaltie of the saide Arte or Misterie, That noe manner of person or persons dwelling or that shall dwell within the saide Citty of Bristoll, the Subburbes or Liberties of the same, shall vse or exercise the recourse or trafficke of marchandise beyond the seas, vnlesse they bee admitted into the saide Societie as by the same Ordinances, Charters and Letters Pattentes may appeare: yt is therefore this daie alsoe Ordeyned enacted and established that noe manner of person or persons whatsoever, inhabitinge or dwelling within the saide Citty of Bristoll or the Subburbes or Liberties of the same shalbee reputed nor taken to bee of the saide Societie, vnlesse hee will subscribe to the Ordinances of the saide Company, and shalbee admitted in open Courte, and his or their name and names entred and recorded into the Lyste or Register of the saide Societie, in the presence of the Maister Wardeins and Assistantes of the saide Arte or Misterie for the tyme beinge, or the moste parte of them. And that they and euery of them shall well and truely observe performe fullfill holde and keepe, Not onely All the Actes Ordinances Statutes and Decrees which they the saide John Barker, John Langton, Humfrey Hooke, Richard Holworthie, William Jones, Humfrey Browne and Thomas Colston shall collect or make and present to the Maister Wardeyns and Comynaltie of the saide Arte or Misterie at their next generall Assemblie, But alsoe All other Actes Ordinances and Decrees which by the maister Wardeyns and Comynaltie of the saide Arte or Misterie for the tyme beinge shalbee made decreed and agreed vppon.¹

Book of Charters I, 61

7. *LEGAL OPINION ON THE CHARTERS, 11 AUGUST 1618*

more ij¹ iiij^s giuen Mr Nicolas Hide Recorder, and is for his Cownsel Concerning the validity of the marchantes Charters, August 11th 1618

002 04 00

Treasurer's Book I, 4

¹ The revised ordinances were approved at a General Court on 17 November 1618.

8. THE SOCIETY'S ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN PARLIAMENTARY CONFIRMATION OF ITS CHARTERS.

LETTER OF 12 FEBRUARY 1621

The companyes letter to Mr Whitson¹ and Mr Guy² Burgesses for Bristol touchinge the renewing of the Charter and other ^{p. 82} necessary occasions to be considered of at this Session of Parliament³

Woorthy Sirs

Since your Departure hence it hath bine confidently written by some knightes and Burgesses of note, that the Parliament should bee againe readiourned from the 30th Januarie vnto that Tuesday moneth, which occasioned vs to suspend writing vnto you, vntill wee vnderstood from yourselves the certainty of the Parliamentes comencement, whereof you havinge nowe advertized Mr Maio^r wee make bould to Crave your best endeavo^r to procure the confirmacion of our annient charters by Act of Parliament which have bine formerly grannted vnto the marchantes of this Citty by his Maiesties Progenito^{rs}, for the better ordering of traffique and marchandizing. You may remember that the like Chartere grannted vnto the marchauntes of Exon⁴ was excepted and reserved in 3 Jac:⁵ when the trade of Spaine was made uniuersall vnto all his Maiesties subiectes for thease reasons followeing recited in the Acte of explanacion or reservacion vizt the antiquity of the Charter, the particuler service done by the inhabitantes vnto the Crowne, the maintenance of poore Almesmen, teaching of Children etc: in all which respectes you may truly affirme that wee doe equallize if not exceed them. First touching service to the Crowne, besides the seuerall faire expeditions in the Raigne of Henry the seaventh and Henry the eighth this Citty furnished three shipps in Cales accion,⁶ butt above all our continued service for many yeeres duringe the Irishe warrs we presume will not be forgotten, and ever since his Maiestyes happie raigne our particuler company⁷ (poore as it is) hath expended at least five hundred poundes for the suppression of pirates infesting all men trading within Seaverne, and you are not ignorant

¹ M.P. for Bristol, 1605, 1614, 1620-22, 1625, 1626.

² M.P. for Bristol, 1620-22, 1624-25.

³ The heading is in a different hand from the copy of the letter.

⁴ 1 July 1560. Printed in W. Cotton, *An Elizabethan Guild of the City of Exeter*, Exeter, 1873, pp. 1-10.

⁵ See p. 6, note 2.

⁶ Bristol had been required to furnish three ships for an expedition to Cadiz in 1595.

⁷ *comp^a* in the manuscript.

howe many other good offices wee doe in the maintenance of eighte poore men, and the schooling of poore Children, all which Cannott bee longer supported vnlesse wee may obteyne lawfull auctoritie for the better ordering of our trade exceedingly repaired through the indiscreccion and excesse of vnexperienced enterlopers, insufficient and Carlesse master mariners and sailers, as alsoe lewd and dishonest boatemmen and trow men¹ whoe doe exceedingly hinder the trade of this Citty, depending cheifely vppon the comoditie of carriage by and vppon Seaverne, ymbeazling and abusing mens goodes for which they Can haue noe redresse at the comon Lawe, the Judges and Jurers being for the most parte altogeather vnacquainted in those courses and consequently doe never award competent Damages, which inforceth Chapmen to fetch their wares from London many miles by horse to their great preiudice and the hindrance of trade and damadge of the Countries which they serve. Wee desire not to extend our auctoritie further then the trade to and from this Porte of Bristoll, And soe wee intend to Mannadge it by godes leave (if it may bee procured) that the aforementioned inconveniences shalbee speedily prevented, and the prosperitie of this City much advanced. Wee presume that the seuerall Burgesses of Gloucester, Teuxbury, p. 83 Worcester, Bewely, Shrewsbury and all other townes bordering vppon Seaverne will readily assist you in this affaires,² for the tradesmen in all those places Doe suffer exceedingly by the negligence and Dishonestie of the Trowmen.³ . . .

p. 84 xij February 1620

Your Lovinge frindes

John Langton

Andrew Charlton

Peter Miller

Willm Pitt

John Barker

John Gonning

Humfry Hooke

Thomas Wright

Richard Holworthy

Willm Pitt

Richard Long

Willm Jones

Arthur Hibbins

Walter Ellis

Giles Elbridge

Francis Derricke

Alexander James

Miles Jackson

Francis Aldworth

¹ The Severn trows or sailing barges. See Grahame Farr, 'Severn Navigation and the Trow', *The Mariner's Mirror*, vol. 32, no. 2.

² *Sic.*

³ The rest of the letter is concerned with a patent for the export of Welsh butter in which the Society had an interest and which was likely to be questioned in Parliament.

Post scriptum

Wee desire you alsoe to confer with Mr Willett our Customer whoe is nowe in London, for the procureing of Lycence to trans-
porte Irishe hides which are tanned in England for the which
lycence wee will giue ij^s vj^d per Dicker¹

To the woorshipful² our loving frindes John Whitson and John
Guy aldermen Burgesses for the Citie of Bristoll

these

in London at the 3 Cuppes in Bred streete or elsewhere

Book of Trade, pp. 82-84

9. LETTER TO JOHN GUY CONCERNING THE ATTEMPT
TO GET PARLIAMENTARY CONFIRMATION OF
THE CHARTERS, 1621³

A letter from the clerke of the Company to Mr John Guy
Alderman informing what charters and writings belonging to the
marchants were sent vnto him for the vse of the Company.⁴

Woorshipful⁵

According to the appointment and direccion of the master⁶ and
Company of Marchantes at their last assemblie, I have deliuered
vnto Roger Chambers Carrier to bee deliuered vnto you, a white
box wherein is conteyned the Charters of Kinge Edward the sixte⁷
and of Queene Elizabeth⁸ togeather with the Acte of Parliament⁹
and alsoe the Coppies of euery of them and as much of the Coppie
of the Charter of king Edward the third¹⁰ as doe sett forth the
service of this Citty with their shippes vnto the kinges Maiesties
Progenito^{rs} and alsoe a breuiatt of what shipping this Citty Did
sett forth in the tyme of the Raigne of kinge Henry the eighte.

¹ See p. 127, note 2.

² *Woor* in the manuscript. The abbreviation can be extended in various
ways.

³ The document is undated, but it was clearly written in 1621. It appears
between a letter of 12 February and a certificate of 24 April 1621.

⁴ The heading is in a different hand from the copy of the letter.

⁵ *Woor* in manuscript standing for Woorshipful, Woorthy sir, or some
such form of address.

⁶ *m* in the manuscript.

⁷ Letters Patent, 18 December, 6 Edward VI, incorporating the Society.

⁸ Letters Patent, 8 July 8 Elizabeth.

⁹ *Statutes of the Realm*, iv. pt. 1, 483. This Act of 1566 is printed in J.
Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 47-50. It confirmed the charters of the
Society, but it was repealed in 1571.

¹⁰ 8 August 47 Edward III. See N. Dermott Harding, *Bristol Charters
1155-1373* (Bristol Record Society's Publications, vol. i), pp. 118 ff.

In the bill or petition which is this Day sent vnto you by John Hayter there is omitted the examinacion and admittance of marriner which if your Woorship¹ shall thincke fitt may be added (in these wordes) Vizt And alsoe to examine and admitt All and whatsoever marriner and marriners that shall vndertake the Charge or government of any ships or shipping belonging or apperteyning to this Citty and Porte of Bristoll and members of the same.²

Book of Trade, p. 85

**10. PAYMENT IN CONNECTION WITH ATTEMPTED
RENEWAL OF THE CHARTER, MARCH 1621**

more for xl¹¹ paide to the Burgesses of the Parliament in March 1621 by order of the Company for to renewe the Charters

0040 00 00

Treasurer's Book I, 7

**11. THE CITY'S CERTIFICATE IN SUPPORT OF THE
SOCIETY, 24 APRIL 1621**

p. 86 A certificate of the Major and Aldermen of Bristoll signifieng the needfull vse of a company of marchantes in Bristoll and that it is needfull that their liberties and priuiledges be confirmed³.

*Ciuitas
Bristoll* To all Christian people to whome theis presentes shall or may apperteyne. Wee the Maior and Aldermen of the Citty of Bristoll Send greeting. Whereas John Whitson and John Guy esquires Aldermen of the Citty of Bristoll and nowe knightes and Burgesses of the same have bine solicited by the Society and Company of marchantes Adventurers of the said Citty to bee humble suiters to the kinges Most Excellent Maiestie and the residue of the most honorable assemblie in his highe Courte of Parliament, for renewing and confirming of the letters patentes and priuiledges of the said Company grannted by our late soueraigne Lord Kinge Edwarde the sixte and allowed and confirmed in the eighte yeere of the Raigne of our late soueraigne Lady Queene Elizabeth, not onely by her graces letters patentes, but alsoe by acte of parliament,

¹ *Woc* in the manuscript.

² For further correspondence with the M.P.s regarding the Charter, see *Book of Trade*, pp. 88, 89.

³ The heading is in a different hand from the copy of the certificate.

notwithstanding an acte of repeale in the thirteenth yeere of her said Maiesties Raigne¹ which was procured by certeyne shopp keepers and tradesmen being then Burgesses for the same Citty when as the meere marchantes were much weakened in abilitie by reason of their greate losses then late before susteyned in the service of the kingdome, and by meanes of Shipwrack and Depredacion of Pirates and enimies, and alsoe notwithstanding the late generall acte made in the third yeare of the Raigne of our nowe soueraigne Lord Kinge James to enable all his Maiesties loving subiectes to trade freely into the Dominions of Spayne Portugall and Franncce,² Theis are therefore to signifye vnto all those whom theis presentes shall or may apperteyne, that since the repealing of the said Acte, and grannting of the said free libertie, Diuers Inhabitanes of this Citty, shoppe keepers, and men of manuell occupacions, forsakeing their vsuall trades and exercisinge the trafficque and recourse of marchandice being altogeather vnexperienced therein, are fallen to decay, and by meanes thereof, and for want of good government and rule to bee had amongst the said Society, and others exercisinge and Depending on the trade of Marchandise and namely amongst saylers, trowman and boatemmen, whoe (for want of power to restraine them) are growne beyond measure exorbitant and dishonest, The said Societie and Company³ and the Inhabitanes of this Citty are much prejudiced, to the greate hinderance of the weale and prosperitie of the same Citty, the Decrease of Navigacion and Dimunucion of his Maiesties Customes. For avoyding of which Inconueniences and preventing the decayeing estate of this Citty, Wee the said Mayo^r and aldermen (at the request and humble suite of the said Societie) have thoughte good to certifie the premisses, in regard *p. 87* it wilbee very profitable for the Inhabitanes of this Citty that the liberties and priuiledges of the said Societie and Company bee from hencefourth rennewed⁴ and confirmed according to their humble suite, Soe as it shall please his most excellent Maiestie, the Lordes spirituall and temporall, and Commons in Parliament assembled to ratifie and allow the same, to whose most excellent wisdomes and good consideracions wee humblye submitt our selves and recommend the premisses

¹ *Statutes of the Realm*, iv, pt. 1, 526. Printed in J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 55-57.

² See p. 6, note 2.

³ Followed by *of* struck through.

⁴ *Rennewed* in the manuscript.

In witness etc

Dat' xxiiijth April 1621

John Doughtie
John Butcher
Robte Aldworth
John Eglesfield
Abell Kitchen

Thomas Farmer
Georg Harrington
Thomas Packer
Robert Rogers

Book of Trade, pp. 86-87

12. FURTHER ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN PARLIAMENTARY CONFIRMATION OF THE CHARTER, MARCH 1624

Alsoe this yeare in March anno 1623¹ the Charter of kinge Edward the sixte with the Confirmation thereof and acte of parliament therevpon graunted by Queen Elizabeth for the incorporateing of this Company, were sent to London to Mr John Barker² and Mr John Guy Burgesses for this City to bee Renewed and enlarged by Acte of parliament. To the furtherance whereof yt pleased the Mayor and Aldermen to certifie the conveniencye thereof for the good of the Commonwelth of this Citty
note in generall as appeareth by the Record of the same certificate,³ the Charters and writings aboue mencioned were brought in by Mr John Barker and put into the Common chest the 29th of May 1630⁴

Book of Charters I, 96

13. MEMBERSHIP LIMITED TO BURGESSES

December the sixte day 1624

... Alsoe at this Courte yt is ordayned that noe person shalbee admitted into the Societie of this Company vnlesse they bee sworne Burgesses of this Citty and inhabiting within the Liberties of the same att the tyme of such their admittance.⁵

Book of Charters I, 97

¹ 1624 by modern reckoning.

² M.P. for Bristol 1624-25, 1628-29.

³ This certificate, which is almost the same as that of April 1621, is found in the *Book of Trade*, p. 146. For a third certificate of 1668, see *Book of Charters II*, 73-74.

⁴ The word *note* in the margin and the words *the Charters and writings* ... 29th May 1630 were added later.

⁵ A Roger Williams of Newport had been admitted in the year 1623/4.

14. *DEALING WITH STRANGERS*

Alsoe this yeere in the xxth Day of December 1626 at a generall Courte was publiquely read the Ancient Ordinances and Decrees of this Societie against forebuyenge and bargaineinge for goodes with Strangers,¹ before the goodes were broughte in to the Common Hawle called Spicers hall alias the Back hawle within the same City.² . . .

Book of Charters I, 101

15. *BILL TO CONFIRM THE SOCIETY'S CHARTER, 1662*

7 January 1662

A Bill for confirming Letters Patents incorporating the Society of Merchant Adventurers of the City of Bristol, was this Day read the Second time.

And the Question being put, That the said Bill should be laid aside ;

It was resolved in the affirmative.³

Journals of the House of Commons, VIII, 340

16. *STRANGERS' GOODS*

10 November 1662

Alsoe at this Courte, Mr William Clare was authORIZED and appoynted to search and enquire of all those who shall from henceforth buy and sell strangers goodes contrary to the Custome and priviledge of this City. And is ordered to imploye himselfe only therein. And to informe the sherriffs of this City of his proceedings therein to the end such goodes may be seised as Forraigne bought and Forraigne solde. For which hee is to haue the sallary of Tenne powndes per annum. To contynue for six moneths vnles further order.

Hall Book I, 344

¹ Strangers, that is those who were not burgesses of Bristol, might trade only on certain conditions. See J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 15-18.

² For the rest of the extract and the action taken against certain members who had offended, see J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 84-87. See also nos. 16, 18, 19.

³ A Committee for enlarging the Charters had been set up in January 1658 (*Hall Book I*, 282), and another in March 1661 (*Hall Book I*, 326).

17. *FURTHER ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN CONFIRMATION OF THE CHARTERS**10 February 1665*

Alsoe at this Courte, It is voted, ordered and decreed, That there shalbe a Peticion made to his Maiestie for the renewing and confirming of the Charter of this Society. And to procure an Act of Parliament for the confirmacion thereof, And for the better and speedier effecting the same, Mr Thomas Langton Master, Sir Henry Creswicke, Sir Robert Yeamans, Sir John Knight, Mr Robert Yate, Mr John Knight, Mr. Robert Vickris, Mr Thomas More, Mr Thomas Scrope, Mr John Aldworth, Mr William Merricke, Mr Alderman Vickris, Mr Walter Tocknell, Mr Robert Aldworth and Mr John Haggatt, they, or an seaven of them, are voted, aucthorized and deputed to acte, contrive and procure the renewing and confirmacion of the said Charter as aforesaid. And it is voted and ordered That what chardge shalbe expended therein shalbe payed by the Haule. And that the said Committee shall meete concerning the same at the pleasure and by the order of the Master.

*Hall Book I, 366*18. *SOCIETY'S PETITION CONCERNING STRANGERS' GOODS**12 February 1667*

Memorandum alsoe it is voted, ordered and decreed, That a petition shalbe preferred to the Maior and Aldermen of this Citty, That all stranngers goodes shalbe brought into the Back haule and put into Cellers there, and that noe stranngers shall buy the same vnles the Freemen of the Company haue the refusall thereof before the same is exposed to sale.

*Hall Book I, 403*19. *FOREIGNERS' GOODS AND THE BACK HALL**26 February 1667*

The petition of the Company of Merchant Adventurers being this day read, It is resolved and agreed that a Committee be chosen to Consider the ancient Actes of this house for bringing of Forreigners¹ goods to the Backhall, and against the Freemens

¹ Foreigner or stranger, i.e. anyone who was not a burgess of Bristol.

Colouring of,¹ and intermeddling with, Foreigners goods, in order to their reviving and drawing them vp in one Act of Common Counsell; and to prepare such additionall Clauses, as may oblige the Master of the Hall to keepe the Storehouses and Cellars only for Forreigners goods, and that Mr Brooks may be likewise ordered from time to time to give notice to all Strangers of the same, and to reporte their opinions.²

the Committee

Sherriff Creswick	Mr Olliff	Mr Young
Mr Griffith	Mr Willett	Mr Lane
Mr Wright	Mr Crumpe	Mr Godman
Mr Knight	Mr Hurne	Mr Cecill

Who are to meete a Munday Morning and to adiourne from time to time.

C.C.P., 1659-75, p. 154

20. COMMITTEE FOR THE CONFIRMATION OF THE CHARTER

11 November 1667

Memorandum That at this Court It is voted ordered and agreed That the companny shall with all convenient Speed endeaue^r to procure their Charter to bee confirmed by act of this present Parliament. And alsoe to procure an Act of Parliament for prohibiting the makeing of White sope or any other sope³ made of Tallowe, Trayne oyle, Rape oyle or any other corrupt Stuffe whatsoever (except only with oyle olive) And that Mr Walter Tocknell, *Master*, Sir Henry Creswick, Sir Thomas Langton, Sir Robert Yeaman, Mr Alderman Willoughby, Mr Alderman Sandy, Mr Robert Yate, Mr John Knight senior,⁴ Mr John Aldworth, Mr William Hasell, Mr William Lysons, Mr Joseph Creswick, Mr Thomas Moore, Mr Gabriel Deane and Mr William Willet, They or any fieve or Six of them, are deputed authorized and appointed To drawe up and frame any petition or petitions

Mr William
Morrice in
the place
of Mr
Aldworth
deceased

¹ I.e. pretending that the goods belonged to them and not to foreigners.

² For various orders of Common Council concerning the Back Hall and goods of non-freemen, see Bristol Record Office, *Book of Ordinances and Acts*, C.T.04273(2), fos. 33v, 42, 60, 71v. The Society's own ordinances of 1618 and 1639 also restricted dealings with foreigners.

³ or any other sope above the line. For the objections to soap made with tallow, see p. 246, no. 475.

⁴ *sent* above the line.

certificates or remonstrances whatsoever for the better carrying on and prosecuting the buisnesses aforesaid, And to imploy a Soliciter or solicitors to prosecute the same. And to procure the same to bee effected, And to meete at the Haule as often as they shall thinke fit from tyme to tyme for the doing thereof.

Hall Book I, 416

21. INSTRUCTIONS TO THE SOCIETY'S REPRESENTATIVE CONCERNING TWO PROPOSED BILLS IN PARLIAMENT, 5 MARCH 1668

The Copie of the Instruccion from the Committee to Mr Elsworth¹ dated the fiveth Day of March 1667.

Civitas
Bristol

Mr Elsworth

In pursuance of a vote of the Eleaventh day of November last of the Society of Marchants of this Citty whereof you are a member (viz^t) That endeavoure should be used for the obteyning an Act of this Sessions of parliament for the Confirmation of our Charters, As alsoe one other Act for the restraint of makeing Soape with Tallowe, you are hereby desired with all convenient speed to addresse yourselfe (on the behalfe of the said Society) to Sir Humphry Hooke and Sir John Knight our Burgesses, and to advise with them, And alsoe with Sir Robert Atkins, Knight of the Bath, our Recorder, and with the best Counsell you shall think off, and can get therein, And to desire their Assistance for the more speedy and effectuall accomplishment thereof. But if our Burgesses or either of them shall either slight these our desires or refuse to contribute his or their Assistance in the promoteing of the said Acts, Then our order is, That you however doe use all those other best waies and meanes which can and shalbee advised you for and towards its facilitation and effecting, and upon your advice and Encouragement, noe reasonable Charge shalbee spared in the Carrying it on, Soe as wee may not faile of our hoped desires (viz^t) the obteyning of the said Acts, especially that for the Confirmation of the Charters of our Society which wee herewith deliver you. And such money shalbee returned you on your Letters as you shall reasonably desire and shalbee Requisite for its furtherance and effectuall accomplishment. And in its Management, our

¹ *Later* Sir Richard Elsworth. He acted as agent for the Society in this attempt to get the Charter renewed. See *Book of Charters II*, 70, 71, 83, 84, 98, 99, 116, 117; *Hall Book I*, 430, 434, 446; J. Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, pp. 290, 291, 297, 299.

further order is, That endeavo^{rs} be used to make up and prevaile with Sir Robert Atkins our Recorder, Mr¹ Vaughan and Mr Seymore and some other popular leading Gentlemen of the Honourable Howse of Commons, Soe as one of them may present our petition and Bills to that prudent and Honourable Assembly the Commons *p.* 69 of England assembled in parliament, And that the others may Speake thereto, and in favour thereof, whereby on theire interest, our just and reasonable desires in our petition and Bills conteyned may haue the better reception, And our desires may be answered thereby. But as to the Fees of passing the Act against makeing of Soape with Tallowe, you must take care that it be passed on the publike accompt. Soe heartily wishing its good issue, Wee for your further warrant haue hereto sett our Common Seale and Subscribed our names this Fiveth Day of March Anno Regni Regis Caroli secundi nunc Anglie etc vicesimo Annoque Domini 1667. And doe remayne your loving friends

John Willoughby Wal' Tocknell Master		
Wm Willett	} Wardens	Robt' Yeamans
Will' Hasell		William Lysons
Walter Sandy		Thomas Moore

Book of Charter II, 68-69

22. THE CASE FOR RENEWAL OF THE CHARTERS, 1669²

Reasons to induce the confirmation of the Charters of the *p.* 89 Merchants of Bristol And especially of that theire Charter Granted them 19^o Caroli primi att Oxford against the which the Turkie and Hamborough Companies haue entred theire Caveats³

May bee drawne { ^{1st} A Comodo If it is confirmed
 ^{2^{dly}} Ab incomodo If it is not.

¹ Followed by a blank space in the manuscript.

² This document consists of notes of arguments to be used, and the meaning is occasionally obscure. It is undated, but the arguments bear a close resemblance to those used in a petition presented by Elsworth to the Council on 1 December 1669 (see P.R.O., S.P.29/268, no. 78(i)). It was probably drawn up by Elsworth, and in the subsequent examination of his accounts there is an item 'For his paines in drawing upp reasons etc hee hath overcharged 005^l : 00^s : 00^d'. See p. 25, no. 24. It is a little surprising that although the document refers frequently to the charter of 22 December 19 Charles I, it does not mention the exemplification of this charter by letters patent of 23 June 17 Charles II (1665).

³ The Levant Company and the Hamburg Company (the Merchant Adventurers of England) were anxious that the Charter granted at Oxford in 1643 should not be confirmed, since it opened their areas of trade to the Bristol merchants, and they had entered caveats against the passing of letters patent until they had been heard.

1st A Comodo If it is confirmed
for these Reasons

1st Because that thereby that knowne statute law 21 Jacobi¹ against Monopolists will receiue Countenance and force Whereas Its refusall not only absoleets that good wholsome Law, But Tantamounts to an invasion If not a suppression and Annihilation of the right of the Merchants of Bristoll who haue not only Charters 6: Edward 6: to incorporate them selves etc and to trade into parts beyond the seas in Generall words, The Turkie Companies Charters beinge only of the Grant of Elizabeth and king James, But have alsoe Charters 19^o Caroli primi to trade for Turkie and Hamborough etc' with a non obstanti² of those Charters by his progenito³ granted to the said Turkie and Hamborough Companys

The words of their Charters 19 Caroli primi Being: Whereas by our Letters pattents under our greate seale wee haue heretofore granted that the Merchants of our Citty of Bristoll should be encorporated etc, But they are yet restrained from that free trade into diuers forreigne parts which some other companyes of Merchants by the favour of Vs and our Ancesto³ and predecessors etc have enioyed and doe enioye, And whereas our good subiects the Merchants of Bristoll have expressed theire loyaltie and fidelity vnto vs in these late tymes of difficiency when the Merchants of our Citty of London who held and enioyed many more priuiledges for the advanceinge of a free and Ample Trade into all Foreigne parts haue forgotten their Duty vnto vs, their soveraigne etc, Knowe yee therefore etc.³

p. 90 2^{dly} Because that many Merchants of very large and considerable fortunes of the Citty of Bristoll would employ the same in a Recourse of Trade to such parts of Turkie where they might promise to themselues such Considerable gaines on theire returnes made home As would bee proporcionable (when least) to, If not above, the Riscons⁴ they run thereby, But haueinge noe encouragment at all to adventure theire Estates on the wings of the seas fortune to those parts wherewith they now Commerce (by reason of the

¹ 21 James I, c. 3. An Act concerning Monopolies.

² The Oxford Charter of 1643 specifically stated that the grant was made to Bristol *notwithstanding* the fact that the Levant and Hamburg Companies had charters giving them the sole right of trade in the areas concerned.

³ This Charter, granted at Oxford in 1643, is printed in J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 106-107, from a translation found in *Book of Charters II*, 86-88. The original is among the Society's records.

⁴ *Sic.*

great interlopation¹ there) They employe such their greate Estates either at Bottonvaria² (the ruine of the very beinge of trade and societies) or at Interest or in purchases.

Whereas the Consequent of such their greate stocks Employment in a Recourse of Trade Would bee

1st The greate advance of his Maiesties Revenue of Costomes Even to neare 30000¹¹ per annum

2^{dly} The Tradesmans and poores Employment at home to gaine them a Livelyhood If not an Estate.

3^{dly} The Encrease of shippes of great force and strength and of Marriners likewise to carry on and manage that Trade in the tyme of Peace which may and will stand his Maiesties and the Kingdome in greate stead in the tyme of Warr or a new Rebellion as in the daies of his Royall Father, To too sad Experience remembring vs what mischeife those Companies shippes then did him and howe vnable other Maritane ports were to resist their force.

4^{thly} The spender³ of the kingdomes Commerce abroad in Maintenance of Its factories grandure by their greater Comissions according to that Maxime, the greater the Comissions by Commerce the greater the Credit and honour of the Merchants and of the kingdome too, for its riches begett awe and veneration and its opulent Commerce Is its strength by its shippes and Mariners; besides what greater signiture can bee giuen of Its Riches and strength then its full Commerce and Multitude of shippes etc.

And surely where there *is* a full trade, Riches flowes in, and *p. 91* the poore wants not, But if there is noe exportacion there can bee noe Importacion, And where Commerce languishes the poore is in Penury. Moreover a rich Trade with forreigne Nations gives greate Encouragement to the gentry to send their younger sonns beyond seas And their sonns too are allured on its reporte to Vndergoe an Apprenteshipp, And as great Estates are with them employed abroad, soe on their returne they come not home

¹ The interlopers referred to are presumably retailers and others not trained as merchants.

² Bottomry. A loan made to the owner of a ship who pledged the ship as a security for repayment. If the ship was lost, the lender lost his money. If it arrived, he received the principal together with interest, which might often exceed the legal or usual rate.

³ ? splendour.

empty handed, haueing alsoe with their riches greatly improved their knowledge for the service of their generacion, whilst for want of a due Encouragement most Gentlemen keepe them at home, And what Its sequell is, the Loosenes and debauchment of this Age gives to too greate demonstracion.

2^{dly} Ab Incomodo if it bee not

For these reasons

1st Because his Lord the Lord keepers refusall of his desired recepi¹ in order for their confirmacion giues such Countenance to those Charters of sole Commerce within those places therein mentioned heretofore granted to the Turkie and Hamborough Companies As if it were not in the Royall power and prerogative of future kings and Queens of this kingdome on any Reasons of state or prudence whatsoever to grant the like to any society of Merchants of any other Citty within the same, Whereas such their Charters of free and sole Trade and Commerce to and within themselves granted vnder submission are supposed to be voydable by, If not voyde in, lawe and Complainable in Parliament.

For these Reasons

1st For that they were granted in diminution of the prerogative Royall

2^{ly} For beinge a Monopoly within the statute 21 Jacobi and against the Common Right of their Fellow subiects The Merchants of Bristoll whoe haue Charters to Trade to those parts as well as themselves

p. 92 3^{ly} For greate wronge and prejudice to his Maiesties Revenue of Customes viz^t A tanto as would on the said Commerce bee advanced to the Crowne as of the other side²

And the rather

2^{dly} Because that thereby they engrosse the richest Trade of the kingdome to themselves for that although they buy nor sell not in Joynt stocks, yet considering the paucity of their Number put into the Ballance against the vastness and Richnes of their said Commerce, And that such Comodities and

¹ The caveats entered against the passing of letters patent were evidently holding up proceedings.

² The argument seems to be that open trade would lead to greater trade and a bigger revenue from the customs.

Manufactures of this Nation as are most vendible and turne best to Accompt in are only proper for those parts, on which reasons none but such as are free of those societies or Trade with them will lay out their monys therein or buy the same. And this beinge a grand truth as to the Turkie Companies Commerce, If not to the other,¹ it may bee well asserted to bee such Narrowinge and Contraction of Commerce As in its mase² effect Tantamounts to a giveinge of prizes³ to Commodities for exportacion beyond which they will not advance, And a laying of Rates on Merchandizes imported vnder which they will.⁴ The tendency whereof must of necessary Consequence bee a greate Lesseninge to his Maiesties Revenue of Customes And the ruine that rich Trade, Its sequell In renderinge It the envy of Neighbour Nations for its value and Riches sake and giveing them great encouragement to settle greater Factories in those partes Then the Turkie Companies stocks is able to ballance.

Whereas the prudence of the Parliament and their opinion is to enlarge Trade and not to contract it, Inasmuch as it is the Manufactures greate exportacion that enriches the Crowne by its Customes and raiseth at home the Prizes thereof to the Tradesmens and Poores (yee every ones) advantage. And it is alsoe the greate returnes made home on its sales abroad that advances the Royall Revenue by the Duty thereon, Its Cheapnes giveinge occasion of its greater Consumption And the wisdom and policy *p. 93* of kings not eyeing soe much the Merchants greate profit on their Merchandizes sales at their Marketts beyond seas or on its returnes As the Advance of their owne Revenues thereby And their kingdomes well thriving by its greate Commerce, It beinge an Vndeniable truth That the freenes and opennes of the Merchants Trade to all places begett its greater recourse.

And surely It is Likewise the prudence and Policy of Kings to keepe Merchants of severall citties in a ballance as well as states, or otherwise Commerce will not only bee contracted but Monopolised to its ruine and suffering a fatall If not a Totall Eclips, although the Monopolizers may perhaps bee enriched thereby.

¹ I.e. the Hamburg Company.

² ? most.

³ Prices.

⁴ The argument is that as these companies controlled the trade, they could fix the prices of the goods they imported, and could also compel home manufacturers to sell to them at unreasonably low prices.

5th Should his Lordship not give but refuse his Recepi, may It not bee supposed to bee an Infringment Quantum in se etc, of his late Maiesties covenant in the said Charter contained for the said Merchantess further renewall¹ etc thereof as Councill should reasonably advise etc/

The words of the Covenant beinge

And wee doe for us our heires and successors covenant etc to and with the said Companie of merchants to renew strengthen and enlarge this our Grante, And to doe such other Acts for their better enjoyeing of the benefitt granted or intended to be granted in such manner and as by their Councill shall bee reasonably advised And as shall bee best for the settling and enlarginge of their Trade and for the removeinge and avoydinge of any restraunte or Impediment that may hinder the same.

p. 94 And who then can thinke without wonder and Amazement that there should not bee given greatest veneration and Continuance to the Charters Even of that Mirror of Kings whose goodnes transcended his Meridian greatnes, seeing hee willingly yeilded up his life in sacrifice and laid downe his neck to the Block at the Feete of his Rebellious subiects of greatest Inhumanities that ever entred the Theato^r of this world to that day for the reprivall of his Prerogative Royall and peoples birth rights from violation and vassalage.

Book of Charters II, 89-94

23. SOME EXPENSES IN CONNECTION WITH THE ATTEMPTED RENEWAL OF THE CHARTER,

1668-1670

1667-8

To Edward Jacob for 30 gallons of secke with bottles and expended by the Committee at severall² meeteings, 14 00 00

note the sack was sent to London to the Attourney generall about the Charter.

Treasurer's Book II, 24

¹ In the Oxford Charter, Charles I made certain promises for himself and his heirs about enlarging the grant in the future, and this refers to the words of his promise, which the document goes on to quote.

² Followed by *twoe* struck through.

7 April 1669

paid Mr Robert Aldworth¹ for his attendance about the Charter 01 10 00

paid William Meredith for procuring the Charter granted at Oxon 05 00 00

Treasurer's Book II, 25

24. 1670²

Objeccions to Sir Richard Elsworths account	li	s	d
In primis For 139 days 3 ^s : 4 ^d overcharged	023	: 03	: 04
For his paines in drawing upp of reasons ³ etc hee hath overCharged	005	: 00	: 00
For 10 ¹¹ paid him 6 th April 68 which have noe Credit	010	: 00	: 00

By what overcharged in 25 ¹¹ for Fees to severalles and entertainment of the now Duke of Albermarle and other	005	: 00	: 00
--	-----	------	------

To 5 ¹¹ in 10 ¹¹ charged for Clarett, Brandy, and white wine given to severall	005	: 00	: 00
--	-----	------	------

To 34 weekes Chamber rent	012	: 10	: 00
---------------------------	-----	------	------

To 246 Daies att 3 ^s : 4 ^d per day	041	: 00	: 00
--	-----	------	------

To 5 ¹¹ taken of in 25 ¹¹ charged for drawing Breifes	005	: 00	: 00
---	-----	------	------

106 : 13 : 04

Due by Sir Richard Elsworths account	182	: 11	: 02
--------------------------------------	-----	------	------

Objeccions as above	106	: 13	: 04
---------------------	-----	------	------

75 : 17 : 10

Allowed for his paines	050	: 00	: 00
------------------------	-----	------	------

Soe in all allowed him for Ballance of his account	125	: 17	: 10
--	-----	------	------

Sir Thomas Langton	William Merick senior
Alderman Sandy	Gabriel Deane
Alderman Willoughby	William Lysons
Alderman Yate	Thomas Moore
Mr John Knight	William Hasell
William Willett	

Book of Charters II, 99

¹ Town Clerk of Bristol, 1653-1676.

² The document is not dated, but it follows a deleted entry of 30 June 1670 stating that the Committee had agreed that Elsworth should have £125 17s. 10d. for the balance of his account.

³ See p. 19, no. 22.

25. PROPOSED ACT TO REGULATE THE TRADE OF MERCHANT ADVENTURERS

11 October 1670

Then voted and ordered that this society shall endeavor to procure an Act of Parliament for the encouragement and regulation of the trade of merchant Adventurers, and Mr Robert Vickris, Sir Robert Yeamans, Mr Yate, major Streamer, sheriff Eston, Mr Walter Tocknell, Mr William Willett, Mr Thomas Earle, Mr John Speed, Mr John Knight Junior are appointed a Committee to mannage this business, and what they or any five of them shall doe herein shall be allowed of by the whole society, and they are to meete euery thursday in order to it.¹

Hall Book I, 464

26. REGISTER OF MEMBERS 1618-1700²

A Catalogue or Register of the names of all³ such persons, as have bine lawfully admitted into the Societie of the maister wardeins and Comynaltie of the Arte or Misterie of marchantes Aduenturers of the Citty of Bristoll accounteing them only which nowe bee, and which⁴ from henceforth shalbee of the same Societie (the marke in the margent serveing only to discribe the Redempti-
tioner/

¹ On 21 January 1671 'A Bill for Encouragement of the Trade of the Merchant Adventurers' was read the first time in the House of Commons, but a proposal to read it a second time was negatived (*Journals of the House of Commons*, ix, 192).

In June 1673, Elsworth was still trying to get the question of the Charter brought before the Privy Council. The merchants said that he had 'acted' too much allready without either our order or knowledge', and stated that they no longer considered him their agent (*Book of Charters II*, 116, 117).

² The Society did not keep a systematic record of members before 1618. For a sixteenth-century list of Bristol merchants, see L. U. Wayne, 'The Smyths of Ashton Court', *Trans. B.G.A.S.*, xxxi, 244-260, which prints a list found loose in John Smyth's account book, 1539-1550, now in Bristol Record Office. The list is headed 'Such as be Merchants and hath credit of Merchants I think not to be denied to be of the mystery.' It contains 124 names, including a baker and a bookbinder. For a list of 76 Bristol merchants in the Spanish Company in 1577, see P.R.O., Pat. Roll, 19 Elizabeth, pt. 8, m. 1.

³ In fact the Register omits 28 names between 1639 and 1651. See Appendix A.

⁴ *supra* above the line.

November: 1618

1618: the:

1618: seuvententh

dead	5+	Mr John Barker	Robert Haviland
		Mr of the Companie dead ¹	Phillipp Dickenson
	3+	Mr John Whitsone dead	Edmund Gainsford
	+	Mr Thomas James dead	Beniamyn Crokhey
		Mr William Vawer	Humfry Fitzherbert
		Mr Mathewe Haviland	John Locke
	5	Mr Robert Aldworth	Walter Ellis
	5	Mr Abell Kitchen	Phillipp Ellis
	3	Mr John Guy	Thomas Colston
	2	Mr John Doughtie	Francis Derrick
	5	Mr William Pitt	Nathaniell Butcher
	2	Mr John Gonninge	William Wyatt
	5	Mr John Langton	Edward Wakeham
	5	Mr Humfrie Hooke	Giles Elbridge
	5	Mr John Tomlinson	Miles Jackson
	5	Mr Andrew Charlton	Peter Miller
		Mr Richard Holworthie	Richard Ellis
	3	Mr Thomas Wrichte	Thomas Rowland
		Mr Edward Coxé	William Griffith
	5	Mr William Jones	Alexander James
		Mr Humfrie Browne	John Griffeth
	5	Mr Richard Longe	George Butcher
		Mr Nicholas Meredith	Thomas Adames
		Mr Boulton	Walter Stevens
		John Rowberoe	Edward Paine
		Thomas Hopkins	William Chetwind
		Arthur Hibbins	Francis Madley
		George White	Richard Vickris
		Nicholas Hickes	Thomas Slocumb
		Thomas Davies	Richard Stanfast
		Robert Johnson	Francis Creswick
		Edmund Browne	Walter Williams
		George Goughe	William Powell
		Michael Wrighte	John Gardiner
		William Pitt	Erasmus Wrighte
		William Hickes	Richard Griffeth
		John Griffeth senior	

¹ Nearly all the names in this list are marked with a cross and followed by the word *dead*. Occasionally this precedes the name. Presumably the clerk made such entries as each member died. Here they have been printed only with the first three names.

	1619 ¹	John Goninge
Mr Christopher Whitson R/		Edward Pitt
Thomas Griffeth		John Langton
Derricke Popley		
Edward Williams R/	1627	William Fitzherbert
John Rodburne		Robert Sheward
Mathias Jones		William Hobson
John Tailer		
William Hopkins	1628	
		Thomas Barker
1620		Robert Yeamans
Richard Plea R/		John Lane
Walter Stevens		Edmond Arrundell
Thomas Dyer R/		Richard Aldworth
	1621	George Lane senior
William Canne		
Edward Peters	1629	
<i>p. 64.</i>	1622	Robert Challoner
Gabriell Sherman		Thomas Neathway
John Fownes		John Moodie
Thomas Jackson	1630	
		Richard Ashe
1623		Joseph Jackson
Martin Pringe		
Roger Williams of	1631	
Neweporte		Thomas Hooke
		Hughe Brqwnne
1624		Thomas Chamber
John White		Thomas Heathcott
John Goughe		Robert Codner
	1625	
William Brinsdon		1632
Edward Moore		John Drayton
		John Cox
		Richard Locke
	1626	
Thomas Lewys		1633
George Lane		Hughe Griffeth

¹ The years in this list run from the date of one annual General Court to another. The date of the Annual General Court varied before 1639, but it was usually held during one of the last four months of the year. After 1639 it was held on 10 November. In a number of cases, therefore, members entered in this list under a particular year were actually admitted in the subsequent year by modern reckoning.

1634

Thomas Wrighte
Richard Skinner
Gittins Lewys
William Colston
Walter Deyos
Phillipp Love

1636

James Barrowe
Christopher Cary
William Merricke

1637

Joseph Tayler
William Yeamans
Josuah Lloyd
Roger Kemys

1638

Thomas Challoner
Walter Tocknell
Richard Bond
Walter Sandye
William Bushe
Edward Lewys
John Bowcher
Thomas Amory¹
Edward Tyzon
James Read
Henry Pitt
George Payne
Edward Caple
Erasmus Wrighte
Arthur Kinge

1639

John Knight
William Hore
William Payne
Robert Yate

Nicholas Snell
Thomas Walter
Robert Pitt
William Clare
William Vickris
Anthony Swymmer

1640

Rowland Searchfeild
Peter Leman
Nathaniell Bowcher

1641

Christopher Griffith

1642

William Dale

p. 65

1646

John Wyatt
Robert Cann now
Sir Robert Cann
Knight and Baronett

1647

William Willett
Richard Deane R/
Thomas Speed
Shershaw Cary
Thomas Southcott
Robert Yeamans
Richard Stephens
Edmond Yeamans
John Willoughby
Henry Hassard

1648

Stephen Keetch Junior
Ralph Husbands
Thomas Jackson
Robert Vickris
John Stone

¹ The names from here to Erasmus Wrighte are bracketed with the words *all dead*.

1649

Richard Elsworthy
Peter James
Thomas Moore
John Bowen
James Dyer

1650

Henry Gough
John Peterson
John Knight Junior
William Bullocke
John Webb
John Creswicke
Anthony Horte
John Aldworth
George Bishopp

1651

Robert Sheward
George Keetch

1652

John Hayman
George Moody
Alexander Jackson
Thomas Gookin
George Lane Junior

1653

Andrew Kirby

1654¹

Mr Thomas Jackson Junior
Mr John Haggatt
Mr Roberte Aldworth
Judge Whitlocke
John Jackson
William Lysons
Anthony Gay
Nicholas Holwey

1655

Sir Thomas Langton

1657

Mr John Pope

1658

Charles Williams
Giles Merricke
Joseph Collins
Edward Lannder
William Hasell
William Cann
John Hill

1659

John Alyes

1660

John Speed
William Yeamans Junior
Richard Hart
Knighted 1660
Mr William Cole
Mr Richard Streamer
Mr Thomas Yate
Sir Humphry Hooke
knight
Mr Christopher Woodward

1661

Robert Yeamans Junior
John Peterson
Samuel Dale
William Doninge

1662

Alexander Tompson
Thomas Eston

¹ Followed by a deleted entry.

1663

Thomas Scrope
 Richard Bickham
 William Emblen
 Phillip Peasley
 Mr Thomas Earle
 Knighted 1681
 Mr William Jackson
 Mr John Knight junior
 Mr John Wright

1664

Mr William Hobson
 James Cade
 Thomas Hare
 George Bowcher
 Thomas Lewis

1665

Jeremy Holwey senior
 Gabriell Deane
 Joseph Creswicke
 Stephen Watts
 William Hayman knighted
 Edward Tocknell
 Henry Deyos
 James Hayman
 William Rodney
 James Whittwood
 Christopher Stevens

1666¹

p. 66 15 Oct. John Rowe²
 1683 disfranchised³
 Wm Merricke Junior
 now Sir William

1667

John Cooke camerarius⁴

William Rogers
 William Swymmer

1668

Samuel Clarke
 William Browne
 John Challoner
 John Pope
 Arthur Hart
 James Croft Junior
 e gratia Mr Thomas —
 Steevens

1670

George Hart

1671

R/Samuel Hale
 Henry Gibbes
 Richard Aldworth
 son of R/ Samuell Clarke

1672

Thomas Richardson

1673

gratia Lord Marquesse of —
 Worcester
 Edmond Arundell

1674

gratia Lord George Berkeley —
 R/ Samuell Price
 gratia William Mors Beadle —
 discarded⁵
 John Willoughby
 William Willett junior
 John Yeaman junior
 John Seword

¹ Followed by a deletion and the words *other side*.

² *John Rowe* underlined.

³ Expelled for his part in the Rye House Plot. See p. 49.

⁴ Chamberlain of Bristol, 1680-1698.

⁵ See p. 58, no. 106.

1675

Joshua Wright
 John Knight filius
 Aldermani Knighted now
 Sir John
 William Jones
 Thomas Moore
 Jacob Beele
 Richard Wastfelde
 R/John Hart

1676

George Bishope
 Sir John Churchill
 Knight gratia
 John Romsey Esq^r
 Town Clerk gratia
 Roger Bathron
 Peter Saunders
 Thomas Willett
 Joseph Bullock

1677

Henry Willoughby
 Richard Lane R/
 John Cary R/
 Henry Daniel R/
 Jahzeel Speed
 Peter Hiley
 John Addis
 George Gough
 John Ewins

1678

Sir William Clutterbuck R/

1679

John Cann
 Walter Lougher
 George Morris R/
 Thomas Turner R/
 Meredith Davies

1680

Thomas Colé
 Richard Champneys
 R/John Yeamans senior
 R/Edward Jones

1681

gratia Edward Cranfeild
 Esquire
 gratia Charles Lord Herbert
 gratia Lord Arthur Somersett
 Robert Kirke
 R/ James Wathen
 Richard Cary

1682

Thomas Colston
 John Combes R/
 Charles Pope R/
 Thomas Earle iunior

1683

Anthony Swymmer
 Alexander Stockdall
 Walter Willett fil R/
 Edward Colston

1684

Robert Yate
 William Attwood
 Francis Brome

1685

James Earle of Ossory
 now Duke of Ormond

1687

Philipp Brome¹
 Charles Stubbs

1688

Charles Jones R/
 Joseph Jackson

¹ This is bracketed with the following names and marked as *dead*.

1690

John Swymmer
 Thomas Kirke
 George Mason R/
 Samuel Price junior
 Abraham Elton R/
 William Daines R/
 Knighted
 James Hollidge R/
 Nathaniel Haggatt Esq —
 Steward of the sheriffs
 Courte e gratia

1691

Richard Lane iunior
 William Hart¹
 Wikham Price
 Thomas Hort
 John Hickes
 William Mariett
 Abraham Hooke R/
 Sir John Duddleston R/

1692

William Clarke R/
 Sir Richard Crumpe
 Knight R/
 Isaac Davies R/
 Richard Francklyn R/
 William Neads R/

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1693

John Bachelor R/

1694

Shershawe Cary²
 William Opie R/
 Samuel Gardiner
 now beadle to the society

1695

John Donning
 Anthony Swymmer
 Philipp Freke R/
 Thomas Dunkin R/³
 John Day senior
 Francis Rogers R/
 Stephen Watts
 Henry Watts
 John Pope R/

1696

Laurence Browne
 Thomas Ditty

1697

Joseph Earle
 Hugh Bickham
 Miles Jackson
 John Blackwell
 William Swymmer iunior
 Robert Lane

1698

John Day iunior
 Abraham Birkin
 John Elbridge

1699

Thomas Watkins
 John Roach R/ *tc*

1700

Joseph Bickham
 Joseph Whitchurch R/
 Henry Swymmer
 Abraham Elton Junior
 William Shaw

Book of Charters I, 63-67⁴

¹ The names from here to Abraham Hooke are bracketed and followed by the word *dead*.

² Bracketed with William Opie and followed by the words *both dead*.

³ There is a gap between this name and the next and a number of short dashes.

⁴ The *Register* in this volume continues to 1765. The number of admissions in the subsequent period was as follows: 1701-10, 44; 1711-20, 63; 1721-30, 52; 1731-40, 57; 1741-50, 21; 1751-65, 35.

II. REGISTRATION OF APPRENTICES AND ADMISSION OF MEMBERS

(1) *Apprenticeship*

By the Society's Ordinances of 1618¹ every apprentice was to be bound for at least seven years, and his term was not to end before he was twenty-one. During that time he was not to marry or be absent from his master for over two months. He was forbidden to deal as a merchant without licence from his master.² The indenture of every new apprentice was henceforth to be enrolled, within six months of his being bound, in a book kept by the Clerk who was to have 4d. for every enrolment. This was in addition to the enrolment at the Tolzey which the City required of all apprentices.

In spite of the definite instruction in 1618, the Society's *Register of Members' Apprentices* does not begin until 1653, and only thirty-five names appear in it between then and 8 January, 1685, on which date it was ordered that, in future, enrolments should be made in the Hall in the presence of the Society. Records of enrolments were entered regularly in the *Hall Books* from that time as well as in the *Register of Members' Apprentices*.

There are 109 names of apprentices in the *Register* between 1653 and the end of 1699. Of these, 57 came from Bristol, 20 from Somerset and Gloucestershire, 5 from Wiltshire, 3 from Ireland, and the rest from 15 counties. Of the fathers of apprentices, 45 were merchants, 28 esquires or gentlemen, 6 mercers, 3 clerks, 3 clothiers, and the rest from 14 different occupations. In 10 cases the father's occupation was not given.

(2) *Admission to Membership*

The Act of Common Council of 1605 which reconstituted the Society laid down certain conditions for admission,³ but the Society's own Ordinances of 1618 contained different and more detailed regulations. The freedom of the Society might be obtained by apprenticeship, by patrimony or by redemption. It might also be given gratis, but *ex gratia* members received the

¹ For the 1618 Ordinances governing apprenticeship, see J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 75-78. These were repeated in the ordinances of 1639.

² The Ordinances required such licences to be reported to the Master and Wardens and to be recorded, but no records have survived.

³ See p. 3, no. 2.

privileges only for themselves and not for their children or their apprentices. No retailer or artificer might be admitted without the approval of a special court. Any one claiming the freedom by apprenticeship had to give notice to the Clerk and produce his indenture. If his master was not present, he had to bring a certificate from him. The fees for those admitted by apprenticeship or by patrimony were 4s. 6d. to the Treasurer, 6d. to the Clerk, and 4d. to the Beadle. Sons of redemptioners had also to pay a fine of 40s.

Apprenticeship was the commonest method by which entry was obtained, but between 1639 and 1699 more than a quarter of the members were admitted by redemption. There was no fixed admission fine for such redemptioners. Generally speaking, for the first three-quarters of the seventeenth century fines were under £20. Fines of £10 and £15 are common, but others ranged from £3 to £30. For the last quarter of the century fines of £25 and £30 are general. Sir John Duddleston's fine of £40¹ seems to be the largest paid by any member in the seventeenth century. Compared with the entry fines charged by some of the London Companies, these were not high, and although they were tending to rise in the last quarter of the century, they remained very low compared with those demanded by the Society itself in the next century.²

The fact that many redemptioners were admitted in the seventeenth century suggests that the Society was willing to recruit new members, provided they would agree to exercise only the trade of a merchant. Petitions for admission were rarely rejected, and fines were usually moderate, although in one or two cases the applicants considered that they were being asked too much and refused to pay.

A record of admissions was kept in the *Hall Books* of which the earliest surviving volume begins in 1639. A selection of the entries is given here to illustrate both normal admissions and certain special cases that came up in the period under consideration.

(i) APPRENTICESHIP

27. 10 November 1653

Thomas Jennings sonne of Thomas Jennings late of Hayes in the County of Middlesex Esquire deceased hath put himselfe

¹ See p. 51, no. 88.

² In 1713, the minimum admission fine was fixed at £50; in 1725, at £100; in 1730, at £200. In February 1738, it was reduced to £100 in order to admit eleven members and then raised to £250. In 1765, it was reduced to £150, but in 1768 was raised to £200, at which figure it stood for the rest of the century. J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 222-223.

apprentice to John Knight the younger of Bristoll merchant and Mary his wife for seaven years by Indenture dated the Tenth day of November 1653.

Register of Apprentices, p. 1

28. 3 November 1660

Nathaniel Stephens sonne of Walter Stephens late of the Citty of Bristoll Mercer deceased hath put himself apprentice to Henry Gough of Bristoll Merchant and Anna his wife for seaven years by Indenture dated the third of November 1660.

Register of Apprentices, p. 2

29. 16 August 1664

John Phelps sonne of William Phelps of the Citty of Gloucester Brewer hath put himselfe apprentice to Walter Tocknell of Bristoll merchant and Joyce his wife for seaven years by indenture Dated xxvij^o. Augusti: xvj.^{to} Caroli secundi gratia Annoque Domini 1664.

Register of Apprentices, p. 2

30. 29 June 1665

William Jones sonne of Henry Jones of the Citty of Bristoll Clercke hath put himselfe apprentice¹ to Walter Tocknell merchant² and Joyce his wife¹ for seaven years by Indenture dated 29^{no} Junij Anno Domini 1665 Annoque Caroli secundi Decimo septimo.

Memorandum That the Thirtieth Day of March 1667 by consent of the Master, apprentice and freindes the apprentice is discharged and his Indentures cancelled.

Register of Apprentices, p. 2

31. 29 June 1669

John Sanders sonne of Arthur Sanders of Mattcomb in the County of Dorset Gent' hath put himselfe apprentice to Stephen Watts merchant and Mary his wife for seaven years by Indenture Dated 29^{no} Junij 1669, Anno Regni Regis Caroli secundi etc xxj^o.

Register of Apprentices, p. 4

¹ to omitted in the manuscript.

² m'chant and his wife inserted above the line.

32. 9 September 1675

Edmond Scrope son of Adrian Scrope late of Wormsly in the County of Oxon' deceased bound to Thomas Speed *merchant* and Ann his wife for seaven yeeres by Indenture dated 9^o September xxvij^o Caroli secundi Annoque domini 1675.

Register of Apprentices, p. 5

33. 12 September 1680

William Davis (son of Philipp Davis late of Chester *merchant* deceased) bound to John Cary *merchant* and Mehitabel his wife for seaven yeeres by Indenture dated xij^o Septembris xxxj^o Caroli secundi.

Register of Apprentices, p. 5

34. 13 January 1683

George Sweeting son of Henry Sweeting of Nether-stowey in the County of Somersett clothier deceased putts himselfe apprentice to Arthur Hart *merchant*¹ and his wife for seaven yeeres by Indenture dated xiiij^o January xxxiiij Caroli secundi Annoque domini 1682.

Register of Apprentices, p. 7

35. 8 January 1685

ordered that all enrollments of apprentices for the future shalbe enterd in the Hall (present the society) and then to be allowed of as good and authentique.

Hall Book II, 254

36. 16 March 1685

Thomas son of George Morgan was bound to Sir John Knight, Knight, and Dame Anne his wife for 7 yeares by Indenture dated xvij^o Februarij 1^o Jacobi secundi and enrolled in the Tolzey of Bristoll.²

William son of William Browne *merchant* bound to his said father and Martha his mother for 7 yeares by Indenture dated xx^o Februarij 1^o Jacobi secundi and also enrolled in the Tolzey.

Hall Book II, 260

¹ Followed by a blank space.

² The City's *Apprentice Books*, which record such admissions, survive from 1532.

37. 20 July 1686

Memorandum That att this Hall it was voted that the Indentures of Richard and John White as apprentices to Peter Hiley and the Indenture of Francis son of William Rogers being now offerd to be enterd be not enterd till further order, They being look'd on as collusive,¹ and the masters respectively to be summoned to attende to answer this buisness and in default of appearance to be disfranchised./ And the said William Rogers to give account why he attends not the meetings of the Hall.

Hall Book II, 306

38. 9 November 1687

Citty of
Bristol

These are to Certifye the Master Wardens Assistants and Cominallty² of Merchants Adventurers within this Citty, That Charles Stubbs was on the Eighteenth day of August Anno Domini 1671 bound to me (a Merchant and member of this society) and to Ann my then wife by Indenture inrolled in the Tolzey of this Citty according to the Custome of the same Citty and that hee the said Charles Stubbs hath according to my satisfaccion served out his time according to the same Indenture and therefore I desire that hee (as haveing been my Apprentice) may be admitted a member of this Society vnder my hand this Ninth Day of November 1687.

Tho : Speed³

Hall Book II, 347

39. 2 February 1693

Mr Francklyn's
apprentice

Memorandum That Joshua Francklyn son of Joseph Francklyn late of Cork in Ireland gent deceased bound to Richard Francklyn merchant (a member of this society) and⁴ his wife for seaven yeeres By Indenture (inrolled in the Tolzey) dat j^{mo} Decembris 1692.

Hall Book II, 520

40. 4 May 1693

Mr Bromes
serv^t.

Memorandum that Francis Harvey (son of John Harvey of Killenn Magna in the kingdome of Ireland Esquire) bound to

¹ Apparently it was suspected that the apprentice had not actually served his time as an apprentice, and was trying to obtain entry to the Society fraudulently and cheaply. See p. 40, no. 48.

² *Coialty* in the manuscript, with a line denoting contraction.

³ Signature.

⁴ Followed by a blank space.

Francis Brome (a member of this Hall) and Ann his wife for vij yeares by Indenture dated 7^o March 1692 and enrolled in the Tolzey.

Hall Book II, 526

41. 10 November 1693

William Shaw (son of Thomas Shaw late of Manchester in the County of Lancaster gent deceased) was by Indenture dated xxvij^o Julii 1693 bound to Charles Jones (a member of this society) and¹ his wife for vij yeeres which Indenture is inrolled in the Tolzey.

Hall Book II, 541

42. 10 November 1694

Memorandum that Richard (son of Francis Tuthill of Bridge-water in Somersetshire Apothecary) bound to Abraham Hooke (a member of this society) and Elizabeth his wife for vij yeeres By Indenture (enrolled in the Tolzey) Dated 2^d Octobr 1693.

Hall Book III, 14

43. 10 November 1694

Memorandum That Meredith Phillipps (son of William Phillipps of Brecon' Gent) was bound apprentice to Abraham Elton (a member of this society) and Mary. his wife for vij yeeres By Indenture (enrolled in the Tolzey) dated iij^o August 1694.

Hall Book III, 15

44. 24 October 1695

Memorandum That xvii^o Octobr' 1695. Brice Nicholls son of John Nicholls of Castle Comb in Comitae Wilts' Clothier bound apprentice to Edward Jones (a member of this Hall) and Grace his wife for vij yeeres by Indenture inrolled in the Tolzey.

Hall Book III, 45

45. 19 December 1694

xix^o Decembr' 1694 Jeremias Philipps sonn of William Philipps late of Penrythen in Comitae Glamorgan gent' deceased bound to James Hollidge a member of this hall and Susanna his wife for vij yeeres by like Indenture.

Hall Book III, 45

¹ Followed by a blank space.

46. 20 May 1695

Mr Batchelors
apprentice

xx^o May 1695 William Bowdler sonn of Marmaduke Bowdler draper bound to John Batchelor a member of this society and Susanna his wife for vij yeeres by like Indenture.

Hall Book III, 45

47. 10 November 1697

Mr Rogers
apprentice

Memorandum That William Rogers son of Robert Rogers of Corke in the Kingdome of Ireland merchant bound to Francis Rogers a member of this Society and Sarah his wife for vij yeeres by Indentures dated the xxx^o June 1696 and enrolled in the Tolzey accordinge to the custome of this City.

Hall Book III, 105

48. 26 November 1697

dispute about
Francis Rogers
apprentice

Some dispute ariseing about Mr Francis Rogers his enrolling his apprentice William Rogers, It is voted that the said Mr Francis Rogers shall within two moneths next comeing give a satisfactory account to this Hall of the legallity of the premisses.

Hall Book III, 111

49. 11 March 1698

Mr Rogers his
certificate
allowed

Memorandum That at this Hall Mr Francis Rogers produced a certificate of the legallity of his binding his brother William Rogers to'himselfe, and the enrollment of him in the Hall booke is allowed of.

Hall Book III, 119

50. 15 June 1699

Richard Salter
demanded his
freedom
dismist

Richard Salter demanded his freedome of this Hall for that he was apprentice to Mr John Cann (a late member of this society) ; the members thinking it to be collusively don asked him seuerall questions (i.e. whether ever he lodged in the said Mr Canns house to which he answered in the negative, whether he was turned over to any other merchant after the death of the said Mr Cann and whether he at any time during his said masters life served his said Master either in keeping his bookes and copying his letters to which he alsoe answered in the negative, whereupon he was dismissed and the Hall to consider whether he be admitted or not until the next Hall.

Hall Book III, 147

(ii) ADMISSION OF MEMBERS

51. 1618

More x¹¹ Received of Mr William Pitt Draper for his
admission the 4th of December 1618 010 00 00

More Received¹ of Thomas Grifeth Gouldsmith ij¹¹
for his admision 002 00 00

Treasurer's Book I, 4v

52. 1621-2

more for ix^s Received of Edward Petre and William
Canne merchantes for their admission into the said
Society 0000 09 00

Treasurer's Book I, 7v

53. 20 April 1639

Att a generall Courte of this Societie. holden this xxth day of Members
Aprill anno 1639. chosen
James Croft²

Att this Courte James Crofte merchant is admitted }
into this Society for that hee was the apprentice of Mr } iiij^s vjd^a
Richard Holworthy Alderman, and hath paide

James Croft³

. . . Alsoe at this Courte Thomas Gay merchant⁵ is } Thomas Hay⁴
admitted into this Society for that hee was the appren- } iiij^s vjd^a
tice of Mr Edward Peter merchant and hath paide

Thomas Gay

. . . Alsoe at this Courte John Scholer merchant is } John
admitted into this Societie for that hee was the appren- } iiij^s vjd^a Schooler⁶
tice of Mr Nathaniell Butcher and afterwarde served
Mr John Gardner merchant and hath paide

John Schooler

Hall Book I, 5

¹ *Rec* : in manuscript. The abbreviation can be extended in a number of ways.

² Marginal note in a different hand from the entry.

³ The names at the end of the records of admissions are the signatures of the new members.

⁴ Marginal note in a different hand from the entry. It gives the name incorrectly as Hay.

⁵ Followed by *for* struck through.

⁶ Marginal note in a different hand from the entry.

54. 31 May 1639

William Clare *merchant* is admitted into the Society of the Company of *merchantes* adventurers of this Citty by Redempcion at the fine of twenty five poundes which hee promiseth to pay vnto the Treasurer of this Society when hee shall require it. } xxv¹¹

William Clare

Hall Book I, 6

55. 15 July 1639

Richard Long the younger marchant is admitted into the Societie of the Company of marchantes adventurers of this Citty for that hee is the sonne of Mr Richard Longe alderman and a *merchant* of this Citty, and is a Burgesse of this same Citty and hath paide } iiij^s vj^d

Richard Longe Junior

Hall Book I, 6

56. 22 July 1639

. . . John Knighte marchant is admitted into the Societie of the Company of marchantes adventurers of this Citty for that hee was the apprentice of Mr Walter Deyos *merchant* and for that hee was bound apprentice to his *master* before his *master* was admitted into this Societie hee hath paide xls } ij¹¹

John Knight

1639

Hall Book I, 7

57. 22 July 1639

Job Willoughby marchant is admitted into the Societie of the Company of marchantes adventurers of this Citty by Redempcion at the fine of twenty poundes which hee by William Yeamans of this Society vndertaketh to pay vnto the Treasurer of this Societie when it shalbee required

Job Willoughby¹

William Yeamans¹

Hall Book I, 7

¹ Signature.

58. 20 September 1639

Stephen Keech an owner of shipping is admitted
into the Society of the Company of *merchantes*
adventurers of this Citty² by Redempcion at the
fine of thirteene poundes sixe shillings eight pence,
which hee promiseth to pay the xxiiij Day of
December next

Stephen
Keech¹

xiiij¹¹ vj^s viij^d

Stephen Keech

Hall Book I, 13

59. 11 November 1639

William Hoare *merchant* is admitted into the
Societie of the Company of *merchantes* Adven-
turers of this Citty For that hee referred himselfe
to the vote of the Company and is balloted at the
fine of twenty markes which hee promiseth to pay
vnto the Treasurer when hee shalbee required.

xviiij¹¹ vj^s viij^d

William Hoare

Hall Book I, 14

60. 11 November 1639

Thomas Walter *merchant* ys admitted into the
Society of the Company of *merchantes* Adventurers of
this Citty by guifte of the Company being that hee
hath byne a dilligent servant vnto this Society paieng
onely iiij^s vj^d.

iv^s vi^d

Thomas Walter

Hall Book I, 14

61. 11 November 1639

Robert Pitt *merchant* ys admytted into the liberties
of this Citty³ for that hee was the sonne of Mr William
Pitt *merchant* and hath exercised the trade of mar-
chandizing within this Citty for many yeeres past and
hath paid

iiij^s vj^d

Robert Pitt

Hall Book I, 14

¹ Marginal note in different hand from the entry.

² Followed by *for that* struck through.

³ An error for *Society*.

62. 3 December 1646

William
Yeamans
chosen a
Member¹

Alsoe on this day Mr William Yeamans is admitted a free Burgesse of this Society, For that hee hath bin bread in, and exercised the trade of a Marchant Adventurer in this Citty the greatest parte of his tyme, And hath agreed to pay for his Freedome the summe of Tenne powndes of lawfull money of England.²

Hall Book I, 91

63. 6 April 1647

Thos.³ Willett
chosen a
Member

Alsoe this day Mr William Willett is admitted a free Burgesse of this Company for that hee was borne in this Citty and allwayes bread vp in the way of a Marchant, and hath agreed to pay for his Freedome Five powndes.

Wm Willett

Hall Book I, 99

64. 23 October 1647

Thomas Speed
elected a
Member⁴

Alsoe at this Courte, vpon the Petition of Mr Thomas Speed to be admitted a free Burgesse of this Society, It was voted as followeth (viz.⁴) by Mr Hugh Browne Master, That hee shalbee admitted for six poundes thirteene shillings and foure pence for a Fine ; And it was voted by the Rest of the Company that hee shalbee admitted for Five Poundes Fine. Wherevpon the said Thomas Speed is admitted a Burgesse of this Society for Five powndes Fine. And for that hee married the late wife of Mr Roberte Yeamans deceased, being⁵ in his life tyme a Burgesse of this Society, And for that his being a free Burgesse of this Society will and is-like to tende to the good and benefitt of the⁶ children of the said Robert Yeamans deceased.⁷

Hall Book I, 105⁸

¹ Marginal note in different hand from the entry.

² This entry is not followed by the new member's signature.

³ *Thomas* in mistake for *William*. It has been struck through in pencil, and *William* added above the line.

⁴ Marginal note in different hand from the entry.

⁵ Followed by *a burgesse* struck through.

⁶ Followed by *fre* struck through.

⁷ Robert Yeamans was one of the leaders of the royalist plot to open the gates to Prince Rupert in 1643, and was hanged together with George Butcher. He left a widow, who was pregnant, and eight small children. Thomas Speed married his widow.

⁸ There is no signature after this entry.

65. 10 November 1648

Alsoe at this Courte, it was referred to a vote, whether John Stone¹ shalbe admitted a free Burgesse of this Society or not, according to the Composicion made with him by the Comittee appoynted to Treat with him touching the Prisage² for one yeare beginning at Michaelmas last past ; Wherevpon it was voted that the said John Stone shalbe admitted, And was admitted a free Burgesse of this Society, Vpon Condicion neverthesse, That if the said John Stone shall at any tyme hereafter vse or exercise the trade of a Grocer vnto which trade hee was bound apprentice, That then hee shalbee vtterly excluded and disfranchised of and from this Society, notwithstanding his said admission. For which admission the said John Stone hath payed to the Treasurer the summe of Twenty powndes.

John Stone

Hall Book I, 129

66. 10 November 1648

And whereas Alexander Gray hath petitioned the Master and Company of this Society to be admitted a free Burgesse of this Society ; It was therevpon voted, That the said Alexander Gray shalbe admitted a free Burgesse of this Society ; hee paying the Fine of Twenty powndes for his admittance. which hee refuseing to pay, was not admitted.

Hall Book I, 130

67. 7 January 1651

Alsoe at this Courte Mr John Creswicke merchant is admitted a free Burgesse of this Society, for that hee was the sonne of Mr. Francis Creswicke a late member of this Society and for that the said John Creswicke vseth noe other trade then the trade of a merchant and hath payd to the Treasurer iiij.^s vj.^d and to the Clerke x^d.

John Creswicke

Hall Book I, 184

¹ Marginal note in different hand from the entry.

² The Crown had the right to take one-tenth of each cargo of wine, and the price given was usually under the market price. The right was generally farmed.

³ Marginal note in different hand from the entry.

⁴ Followed by *Citty* struck through.

⁵ Marginal note in different hand from the entry.

68. 20 January 1651

Mr George
Bishop elected
a Member for
services
rendered
the Society¹

... Alsoe at this Courte, the Master and Company takeing into consideracion the many favours and curtesies done vnto this Company by Mr George Bishoppe at London, Did admitt the said Mr George Bishoppe a free Burgesse of this Society, Provided² that hee shall not at any tyme hereafter be priviledged to make any sonne or servante of his a free Burgesse of this Society, by vertue of this his admission otherwise then according to the Booke of Orders formerly made by this Society

Geo : Bishoppe

Hall Book I, 187

69. 17 February 1651

Major General
Skippon and
Major General
Harrison
chosen
Members⁴

Alsoe, at this Courte, the Master, Wardens, assistantes and Cominalty³ of this Society takeing into consideracion the many favours done vnto this Society by the Right Honourable Major generall Skippon and Major generall Harrison, did vote and admitt the said Major generall Skippon and Major generall Harrison free Burgesses of this Society, vpon Condicion that they shall not be priviledged to make their sonnes, servantes or apprentices free of this Society by vertue of this their admission. And the said Comittees elected touching the Calueskin businesse are desired to intimate by Lettere to the said Major generall Skippon and Major generall Harrison this their admission, in thankfulnessse for their favours.⁵

Hall Book I, 189

70. 14 October 1654

Memorandum That at this Courte Mr John Jackson is admitted a free Burgesse of this Society, for the Fine of three powndes, which hee hath promised to pay to the Treasurer.

John Jackson

Hall Book I, 250

¹ Marginal note in different hand from the entry.

² Followed by *sh* struck through.

³ *Coialty* in the manuscript, with a line denoting contraction.

⁴ Marginal note in different hand from the entry.

⁵ On 2 December, 1645, Major-General Philip Skippon had been made governor of Bristol and may have had contacts with the merchants at that time. Presumably he and Harrison had been of help to the merchants in their dispute with Hugh Lewis over the export of calf-skins. See p. 118.

71. 10 November 1660

Also at this Court Mr Humphrey Hooke is admitted a member of this Society, and for the fine which he is to pay, is by the voate of the Company, referred to himselfe,¹ And hath paid to the Treasurer iiij^s. vj^d. to the Clerke 10^d.

Humpy Hooke

Hall Book I, 313

72. 12 December 1663

Memorandum That the same Courte Mr John Wright was admitted a free Member of this Society, For the guifte of a silver Tankard. And hath payed the vsuall Fees.

John Wright

Hall Book I, 355

73. 10 November 1668

Arthur Hart merchant is admitted a member of this Society, for the Fyne of Forty shillings by vote of the company, which fyne with the vsuall Fees hee doth promise to pay as accustomed. which was soe done for that hee had not served his full appren-
tishippe but was turned over to serue another Master.

Arthur Hart

Hall Book I, 437

Arthur Hart²
haveing served
part of his
apprentishipp
to a Lynnen
Draper and was
turned over to
serue the rest
of his tyme
with a
Merchant

74. 21 March 1672

At this hall Samuel Clarke on his peticion now exhibited was admitted a member of this society for that he was the sone of a late member of this Hall by redempcion And doth promise to pay Mr Treasurer on demand the accustomed Fine of Forty shillings and the other vsuall Fees to the Clarke etc.

Samuell Clarke

Hall Book II, 26

75. 29 August 1673

Memorandum That at this Court or Hall The right Honourable Henry Somersett Lord Herbert Baron of Chepstowe Raglan and Gower Earle and Marquesse of Worcester Lord President and Lord Lieutenant of Wales and the Marches and of the Citty of

¹ Followed by *to pay* struck through.

² The name is in a different hand from the entry.

Bristoll and County of the same Knight of the most noble order of the Garter, and one of his Maiesties most Honourable Privy Councell was admitted a member of this Society.¹

Worcester

Hall Book II, 50

76. 31 August 1674

Memorandum That, Att this Court or Hall It was voted and ordered That William Mors our Beadle² be admitted gratis a member of this society, And thereupon he was called in and he promised to be conformable and obedient to the orders rules and constitutions of this Hall but not to take any benefitt hereby for freedome of any child or apprentice.

W Mors

Hall Book II, 70

77. 29 September 1676

Memorandum That at this Court or Hall the right worshipfull Sir John Churchill knight a free Burgesse of this Citty and Attorney Generall to his Royal Hignesse the Duke of Yorke was by an unanimous vote elected and admitted a member of this society.³

Jo : Churchill

Hall Book II, 100

78. 16 October 1677

Then also Mr John Cary⁴ (son of Mr Shershaw Cary a member of this society) was admitted into the society on his petition now exhibited, and his promise of payment of ten poundes to Mr Treasurer for the vse of this society.

I doe promise to pay to Mr Treasurer ten poundes on demannnd, and I wilbe obedient and conformable to the rules orders and constitutions of this society.

John Cary

Hall Book II, 114

¹ Henry Marquis of Worcester who succeeded James Duke of Ormonde as Lord Lieutenant of Somerset and Bristol in 1672. He became Duke of Beaufort in December 1682.

² See p. 58, no. 106.

³ Son of Jasper Churchill of Bradford, Somerset, and cousin to the great Duke of Marlborough. Recorder of Bristol, December 1682; Master of the Rolls, January 1685.

⁴ Author of *An Essay on the State of England in relation to its Trade, etc., An Account of the Proceedings of the Corporation of Bristol . . . for the better employing and maintaining the Poor, etc.*, and numerous other works. For his activities as the Society's agent in London, see pp. 258-260.

79. 10 November 1677

Henry Daniel vpon his petition now exhibited setting forth *p. 118* that hee had serued Mr Richard Deane (a member of this society) here and beyond the seas as an apprentice for the terme of seauen yeeres and upwards but was not bound to him by Indenture inrolled in the Tolzey as usuall is admitted a member of this society soe as hee pay Forty shillings to Mr Treasurer by way of redempcion and alsoe 4^s 6^d the vsuall Fees on admission of apprentices and to the clerke and beadle their accustomed Fees.

I doe promise to pay to Mr Treasurer for the vse of the Hall *p. 119* Forty foure shillings and six pence and to the clerke and Beadle their accustomed Fees and I will be subject to and ordered by the lawes and constitucions of this Society.

Hen Daniell

Hall Book II, 118, 119

80. 10 November 1681

Voted that Mr James Wathen be denyed the freedome of this¹ *p. 188* Hall (as apprentice to Mr Henry Gough) for that it appears hee was only colourably bound an apprentice to him. But how-soeuer hee desireing (viva voce) that hee might be admitted a Member of this Hall paying a small fine it is voted if paying Forty shillings to Mr Treasurer and the usuall Fees to the Clarke and Beedle hee be admitted accordingly.

I doe promise to be obedient to the ordinances of this Hall *p. 189* and to pay to Mr Treasurer Forty shillings within six daies next comeing and to the Clarke and Beedle their accustomed Fees.

Ja Wathen

Hall Book II, 188-189

81. 15 October 1683

Voted by this Hall nemine contradicente that John Rowe being suspected to be in the late horrid conspiracy against the life of his sacred maiestie and his only and deare brother James Duke of York and being fled from Justice to Rotterdam or other parts beyond the seas Be disfranchised of this society and his name expunged out of the Hall booke; and so 'twas then done.²

Hall Book II, 216

¹ Followed by *Citty* struck through.

² See p. 51, nos. 87, 89. He had been the City Sword Bearer. For his part in Bristol politics, his share in the Rye House Plot and Monmouth's rebellion, and his activities in Bristol after the Revolution, see J. Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, pp. 391-2, 396-7, 398, 404, 417-19, 429, 463.

82. 17 December 1683

Memorandum That at this Hall Mr Edward Colston (as being a free Burgess of this City and a meere merchant and son of Mr William Colston merchant deceased a late member of this society) was admitted into the liberties of the same society.

I doe promise to be obedient to the rules and constitutions of this Hall and will pay to Mr Treasurer and the Clerke and Beadle the accustomed Fees.

Edward Colston

Hall Book II, 226

83. 22 August 1685

Memorandum That att this Court or hall it was voted and ordered that the Right honourable James Earle of Ossory¹ viscount Thurles Baron of Moore Parke and one of the Gentlemen of his Maiesties Bedchamber be from henceforth a member of this Society And that the Clerke attend his Lordshipp att Badminton with an exemplificacion of this vote.

Hall Book II, 271

84. 7 May 1689

ordered that Mr Abraham Elton and Mr Thomas Edwards merchants vpon their petitions now exhibited be admitted members of this Society they paying respectively to the vse of the sayd society the summe of Fifty poundes sterling.²

Hall Book II, 404

85. 13 October 1690

Voted that the former order made for Mr Abraham Eltons admission on payment of 50¹¹ be vacated.

Voted and ordered That the said Abraham Elton on his petition now exhibited be on payment of thirty poundes admitted a member of this society.

I will pay to the Treasurer the Fine of thirty poundes and the accustomed Fees to the clerke and beadle And I wilbe obedient to the ordinances and rules of this society.

Abra : Elton

Hall Book II, 456

¹ Son-in-law to the Duke of Beaufort.

² Elton was later admitted for £30. Edwards did not become a member.

86. 10 November 1690

Alsoe ordered that Mr Nathaniel Haggatt¹ be presented with a vote for his being a member of the Hall but to receive noe benefitt thereby it being honorary and given him gratis.

Hall Book II, 462

87. 18 April 1691

Memorandum That at this Hall Mr John Rowe² appeared and demanded his freedome, and there vpon the vote of his disfranchisement was read to him, wherevpon he said he left it to their consideration whether he should be restored or not and departed. Therefore 'twas voted that it be left to some other Hall.

Hall Book II, 468

88. 10 November 1691

Voted that Sir John Duddlestone be on his petition now exhibited be admitted into the freedom of this society upon ^{40li Sir John Duddlestone} payment of Forty poundes to the Treasurer.

Then also voted that Mr Abraham Hooke be (on his petition now exhibited) admitted on payment of thirty poundes to the Treasurer.

. . . Mr Abraham Hooke being called in and declaring he would not accept of the vote made vpon his petition : It is voted that his petition be rejected.

Hall Book II, 482

89. 2 October 1693

Vpon Mr John Rowes application that he might be dismist from this society on receipt of the Fine he paid for his freedome ^{John Rowes relinquishment of freedome} It is voted and ordered that on his signing an instrument whereby he relinquishes all benefitt of freedom of this society Mr Treasurer doe refund to him the Fine wch he paid for his incomb.

Hall Book II, 538

90. 4 April 1695

Memorandum That John Donning (son and apprentice of William Donning deceased a late member of this society) being ^{admission of Mr John Donning}

¹ Steward of the Tolzey Court, September 1690.

² See p. 49, no. 81.

this day as such sworne a free Burgesse of this city (as Mr Cooke now present in hall hath certified) is admitted into this society on paying the accustomed Fees.

I doe promise to be conformable to the constitutions of this society and will pay the vsuall Fees to the Treasurer Clerke and Beadle.

Jn^o Donning

Hall Book III, 32

91. 14 November 1695

Memorandum that the petition of Mr Stephen Peloquin¹ merchant (a native of France but a Burges of this City) to be admitted into this society was read, and by a vote of the Hall rejected.

Hall Book III, 53

92. 17 January 1696

Mr John Pope
admitted into
the Hall
30 incombe

. . . voted that Mr John Pope (a free burgess of this city and bread in no other trade than merchandizing) be admitted into this society vpon his payment to Mr Treasurer of thirty poundes for his incombe.

I doe promise to pay the said thirty poundes to Mr Treasurer and the accustomed Fees to the clarke and beadle And to be obedient to the ordinances² of this Society.

John Pope

Hall Book III, 62

¹ Member of a wealthy Huguenot family. No reason was given for his rejection, which was presumably on religious grounds.

² *ordinneces* in the manuscript, with a line denoting contraction.

III. OFFICERS, HALL MEETINGS, AND GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

The miscellaneous extracts in this section are intended to illustrate something of the organization and administration of the Society. The chief officers were the Master, the two Wardens, and the Treasurer, who were elected annually. Document no. 93 is the earliest surviving reference to the elections,¹ but it was not in fact written until some thirteen years after the events it records.² The names of the Assistants are preserved from 1620.³ They were twelve in number from 1618 to 1639, when the new Ordinances reduced them to ten. In the same year there was a change in the procedure for electing the Master (no. 97).

Some of the extracts refer to the Clerk, the Beadle, and the Collector of the Hall's Duties.⁴ The Ordinances of 1639 ordered that the duties of the Clerk and the Beadle should be performed by one person, but this arrangement was not permanent. The Beadle eventually took over the duties of the Collector, and in addition became Bailiff for the Manor of Clifton (no. 107). There is one reference to the appointment of an Assistant Clerk (no. 98), but the experiment was not repeated.

Document no. 109 illustrates the form of the Minutes kept by the Clerk and the general nature of the business at Hall meetings. It seems desirable to print one such report at length, as a considerable number of extracts in this volume are taken from the *Hall Books*.

Illustrations of the part played by Committees and by special representatives in conducting the Society's affairs will be found in other sections. Regulations concerning elections, procedure at meetings, and the duties of the officials are given in detail in the Ordinances of 1618 and 1639. The oaths taken by the officials, and the bonds given by the Treasurer and the Beadle are also preserved in the Society's records.⁵

¹ The names of the Master and Wardens of the merchants in 1500, 1552, 1566 and 1569 have been preserved, but there is no continuous record until 1605. See J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 26, 40, 46, 51.

² *Book of Charters I* was begun in 1618, but it records the names of the officials from 1605.

³ *Book of Charters I*, 89 et seq.

⁴ See pp. 56, 57, 63.

⁵ For the oaths of officials, see *Book of Charters II*, 8-10; for the Treasurer's Bond, see *Book of Trade*, p. 79; for the Beadle's Bond, see *Hall Book III*, 99.

93. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

the seaventh daie of May anno 1605¹

Memorandum that at a generall Courte, and by full Consent of the Maister Wardeins and Commonalty aforesaide in ample number assembled, holden in their Common hall (called Saint Clementes Chappell) the daie and yeere abouesaide, by vertue of the Letters patentes, Liberties, and Priviledges of the said Societie are Elected and Chosen to remayne in Office for the yeere followinge

Mr John Hopkenes	maister
Mr William Vawer	} wardeins
Mr John Whitsone	
Mr Thomas Aldworth	Treasouro ^r

Book of Charters I, 33²

94. Octavo die Mensis Octobris anno Domini 1611

Memorandum that at a generall Courte (and by full consent) of the Maister Wardeins and Commonalty aforesaide in ample number assembled, holden in their Common Hall the day and yeere aboute written, are elected and Chosen for the yeere followinge.

Mr John Whitsone	Maister
Mr John Barker	} wardeins
Mr John Gonninge	
Mr John Guy	Treasourour

Book of Charters I, 45

95. PAYMENTS TO THE CLERK

1618-19

more iiij ¹¹ paid Richard Grifith for writinge The merchantes bookes and his wages	004 00 00
--	-----------

. . . more iiij ¹¹ paid to Richard Grifeth Clarke to the Companie of marchantes for his Wages for one whole yeere ended at Michaelmas 1619.	004 00 00
--	-----------

Treasurer's Book I, 5

¹ This is a very unusual date for the holding of elections. From 1606-1639, they were always held in October, November or December. Under the Charter of 1639, the date was fixed as 10 November. It is possible that the clerk writing more than thirteen years after the event may have made an error in the date. See p. xxiv, note 7.

² In the early part of *Book of Charters I* the records of elections are followed by notes of the main events of importance affecting the Society during the period of office of those elected.

96. LATE ARRIVALS AND ABSENTEES

22 July 1639

Alsoe att this Court theis gentlemen, namely Alderman Tom- Members who
linson, Mr John Goning the younger, Mr Gabriell Shereman, Mr came late¹
William Cann, Mr Hughe Browne, Mr William Colston, Mr Richard
Ashe, Mr Michael Wright, Mr Arthur King, Thomas Amory,
Edward Totnell and John Schooler came late, after the glasse was
Runne out and Turned againe.

Alsoe att this Courte Theis persons viz

Absentees¹

Alderman Holworthy	Gittins Lewys
Alderman Jones	John Bowcher
Mr Miles Jackson	Henry Pitt
Mr William Hobson	James Crofte
Thomas Heathcott	Thomas Gay
Christopher Carye	Richard Bond
John Goughe	John Drayton
Richard Lock	George Payne
Edward Lewys	

being all of them warned to bee at marchantes Hall on Monday
the 22th July at three of the Clock after noone, made default of
apparence.

Hall Book I, 9

97. METHOD OF ELECTING THE MASTER

the xjth November anno 1639

Att a generall Courte of the maister Wardeins and Comonalty Qualification
of the Arte or mistery of marchantes adventurers of the Citty of of Master
Bristoll in ample number assembled in theire Common Hawle yt wardens and
was agreed that not onely at this tyme but att all tymes hereafter assistants²
the manner of Eleccion of the maister Wardens and Assistantes
shalbee thus. viz^t. the maister to bee chosen for the tyme being
shalbee chosen out of three, whereof one to bee named by the
master³ for the tyme being, one by the wardens and assistantes,
and the third by the Comynalty,⁴ and according to this order the
maister wardens and assistantes are this day Chosen and sworne
being this present eleventh day of November 1639 . . .⁵

*Hall Book I, 15*¹ Marginal notes in a different hand from the extract.² Marginal note in a different hand from the extract.³ *mr* in the manuscript standing for master or maister.⁴ The only restriction hitherto had been that the member chosen must previously have been a Master or Warden (Ordinance of 4 April 1639).⁵ Followed by the names of those elected.

98. APPOINTMENT OF AN ASSISTANT CLERK

10 November 1641

And itt is further agreed by a generall consent of the whole Companie now assembled that William Vertue shalbee an Assistant vnto Richard Griffeth Clarke vnto this Societie during the life of Richard Griffeth they behaueing themselves to the content of this Companie.

Hall Book I, 44

99. COLLECTOR OF DUTIES

10 November 1642

Alsoe att this Court Mr Richard Ashe is elected and chosen To bee collector of the wharfadge kannadge and planckadge, tonnadge to the poore, grocerie and all other duties of shippinge¹ belonging to this Societie, as well of Freemen as of strangers To the vse of this Societie. . . And hee to haue Thirtye powndes per annum To bee paid him quarterlie And to pay all paimentes of this Company.

Hall Book I, 57

100. 11 April 1650

Alsoe at this Courte, it is ordered, That Richard Ash his sallary shalbe augmented from Thirty powndes to Forty powndes from³ our Lady day last for one yeare then next ensewing, In consideration whereof the said Richard Ash doth promise to secure the Hall dueties to the Treasurer for this yeare ending⁴ at our Lady day 1651.

Hall Book I, 154

101. HALL MEETINGS AND DINNERS

10 November 1664

And whereas there haue bin many meetings appoynted and the Company warned to meete at the Haule, which haue bin often tymes refused and neglected, And for want of appearance nothinge hath bin done in order to the businesse of the Haule upon such

¹ of *shippinge* above the line. For these various duties, see pp. 136, 244.

² In a different hand from the extract.

³ Followed by a deletion.

⁴ Followed by *Five and Twentieth of November nexte* struck through.

sommions, It is this day ordered and decreed¹ for the better carryinge on the businesse of the Haule for this next yeare and yearlie afterwarde duringe the pleasure of the Haule That the Master, Wardens, Assistantes and Treasurer and Clerckes belonging to the Company shalbe warned to appeare in their common Haule, on the Tenth Day of February next, the 10th Day of May And the 10th day of August, over and aboue thother dayes of meeting² appoynted by the Master, then and there to acte and contrive the good and benefitt of the Company, And that on euery one of these dayes there shalbe a Dinner provided for them, at the chardge of the Haule, Provided it exceed not the charge of 4¹¹ at a tyme, And if any of the said dayes happen to be on a sunday then to be kept the next day after.

Hall Book I, 360

102. COLLECTOR OF DUTIES

19 September 1666

Memorandum That at this Courte Mr Richard Locke merchant was admitted by vote into the office, which Mr Richard Ash deceased late had and enjoyed belonging to the Haule, which is, To receive the Guiftes of Benefacto^rs for the vse of the poore of the Almeshouse, the quarteridge of Freemen of the Haule³ and the pownadge of Marriners and seamens wages⁴ And all other thinges belonging to the poore of the said Almeshouse. And is to pay the poore weekly on euery Satturday according to the former vse and custome. And for his sallary therefore the said Richard Locke is voted to haue yearlie Twelue powndes to be payd quarterly by the Treasurer.

Hall Book I, 395

103. APPOINTMENT OF A CLERK

7 July 1670

At a gennerall assembly of the society of marchantes in their common hall, Yt was Voted and agreed vpon that Francis Yeomans the Younger bee admitted and is chosen Clerke to this company in the roome of John Hartwell Lately deceased, And It

¹ *ordered and decreed* above the line.

² Followed by *to* struck through.

³ The payment of quarterage money by members at the rate of 4d. a quarter was ordered in the Ordinances of 1639.

⁴ Levied at the rate of a penny in the pound.

was also agreed Vpon that Francis Yeomans, now the clerke, shall haue and receiue the same yearly sallary as the said John Hartwell did Injoy and receiue being Tenn poundes per Annum.

Hall Book I, 462

104. 12 August 1672

Then also voted and ordered that a statute booke¹ be bought for the vse of the Hall and that the Clerke doe buy one accordingly by the next Hall day.

Hall Book II, 27

105. LEGAL ADVISERS

31 August 1674

That William Pawlett Esquire² barrister at lawe be on all emergent occasions made use of as Counsell to this society and to ioyn with Mr Towne clerke in his advises on all such occasions, and the master is desired to³ acquaint⁴ him⁵ with this vote.

Hall Book II, 70

106. DISMISSAL OF THE BEADLE

22 June 1676

ordered and voted that forasmuch as Mr William Mors the beadle⁶ hath not according to a former order rendred an account to the master to satisfaction of the moneys by him receaved and paid for the vse of this society, That he doe give within tenn daies next coming a iust and perfect account to the master, Mr Treasurer, sheriffe Lane, Mr John Jackson, Mr Arthur Hart and John Knight Esquire, or to any foure of them, and thereupon pay and satisfy the moneys by him due to this Hall on the ballance of such account, And if fayler hereof be made the bond given and entred into by him the said Mr Mors and his sureties to be putt in suite against him or them as they the said

¹ A book containing the statutes of the realm. On a number of occasions in the century, the Clerk was told to buy the latest statute book.

² He became Recorder of Bristol in 1688.

³ Followed by *be* struck through.

⁴ Written first as *acquainted* and *ed* then struck out.

⁵ *him* above the line.

⁶ Admitted Beadle on 4 August 1674 (*Hall Book II, 66*); made a member of the Society *gratis* on 31 August 1674 (*Hall Book II, 70*). When his accounts were audited on 1 July, 1676, he was £106, 6s. 11d. in arrears (*Hall Book II, 96*).

committee or any foure of them shall order and direct. Also ordered that the said bond be taken out of the chest and delivered into the masters handes.

voted that the said William Mors for his not rendring his account to the masters satisfaction as formerly ordered be forthwith discharged from the said office, and another person chosen in his roomth and steed, and he disfranchised forthwith.

ordered that the petition of Martha (the wife of the said William Mors) be considered off att the next Hall and not before.

Voted that Mr Thomas Jackson (a member of this society) be admitted into the office of Beadle to this society in the roomth of Mr William Mors, he the said Mr Jackson giving security for discharge of the office to the liking of the master and wardens, And when this is soe don he is to enter on the execution of the office.

Hall Book II, 95

107. THE BEADLE AND THE CLIFTON RENTS

10 November 1677

Voted that¹ Thomas Jackson our Beadle be constituted our Bayliffe for collecting the rente of our Manno^r of Clifton bought lately of Mr Roger Bathron and others, and in consideracion thereof it is ordered, that his sallary or yeerely stipend be encreased from Twelve to Twenty pounds per annum dureing the pleasure of this Hall.

Hall Book II, 119

108. ABSENCE FROM HALL

An hall was summoned to be on thursday the 22th June 1682 But there being no full appearance another hall was then ordered to be summoned on saturday the 24th June 1684.

Hall Book II, 196

109. A MEETING OF THE HALL

Satterday the 10th Day November 1683 Att a generall assembly of this society were sommoned to appeare in their Common hall by Eight of the Clock in the Forenoone of this present day.²

Merchants Hall
Bristol

¹ Followed by a deletion.

² It seems that the Clerk wrote out a complete list of members before the actual meeting of the Hall, and when it met he indicated by various marks those who were present and those whose absence could be accounted for. Only some of the lists are so marked.

present The worshipping¹

William Merrick master

p' Mr Samuel Price } wardens
p' Mr Henry Daniel }

— Mr Thomas Eston. sick
Mr William Jackson

p' Mr Giles Merrick

p' Mr Walter Lougher

p' Mr William Jones

p' Mr Thomas Turner

p' Mr John Yeamans
senior

Mr Thomas Colston
Junior

p' Sir Richard Hart
knight Treasurer

p' Mr John Combs

p' The Right worshippingfull
William Clutterbuck
Esq^r Mayor

p' Sir Robert Cann Knight
Barronet

Sir Robert Yeamans

Knight and Barronet

Sir John Knight senior
Knight

— Mr Robert Vickris in rure

p' Sir Thomas Earle Knight²

p' Mr William Hayman

p' Mr Robert Challoner.

Mr Thomas Speede.

Mr Richard Deane.

p' Mr Henry Gough.

Mr Thomas Scroop.

Mr Joseph Creswick
Alderman.

Mr John Knight.

Mr John Cooke
Chamberlain⁴

— Mr Charles Williams att
London.

Mr John Creswick in rure

Mr Christopher Griffith.

Mr Alexander Thompson.

Mr Richard Bickham.

Mr Henry Deyos.

— Mr Thomas Hare sick

Mr John Challoner att sea

Mr Samuel Clarke.

/ p' Mr John Hart.

p' Jacob Beale.

p' George Bishopp.

p' Mr John Seword.

Mr Thomas Richardson

Mr John Addis

Mr John Cary

Mr George Morris

— Mr Thomas Moore. att sea

Mr John Wyatt

— Sir Richard Elsworth
Knight

— Mr Thomas Gookin

— Mr Samuel Dale

— Mr James Cade

— Mr Thomas Lewis

p' Mr Meredith Davis.

p' Mr George Bowcher.

Mr Jeremy Holwey.

— Mr James Whitwood att
London

Mr William Rogers.

Mr James Croft.

Mr Henry Gibbs.

— Henry Duke of Beauford.

— George Earle of Berkely.

p' Mr John Yeamans Junior

¹ *worpp* in the manuscript with a line to denote contraction. It can be extended in various ways.

² Followed by a deletion.

³ Probably this indicates that they were summoned to the meeting but were absent.

⁴ *Chamblin* in the manuscript with a line denoting contraction.

Mr William Browne.	— Mr Joshua Wright att
p' Mr William Dunning.	London
p' Mr Arthur Hart.	— Sir John Churchill Knight
p' Mr George Hart.	Recorder
p' Mr Edmund Arundell	p' Mr John Rumsey
sheriff.	Townclerke
Mr Samuel Hale.	p' Mr Peter Saunders.
p' Mr William Swymmer.	p' Mr Thomas Willett
p' Mr Stephen Watts.	— Edward Cranfeild Esquire.
p' Mr Edward Tocknell.	— Charles Earle of Worcester
— Sir John Knight Junior	— The lord Arthur Somerset.
Knight: att London	p' Mr Robert Kirke.
p' Mr Richard Lane.	p' Mr James Wathen.
p' Mr Rowland Serchfield	— Mr Richard Cary at
Mr Joseph Bullock	London.
p' Mr Henry Willoughby	p' Mr Charles Pope.
p' Mr Jahzeel Speed.	— Mr Thomas Earle at Bilboa.
Mr Peter Hiley.	p' Mr Anthony Swymmer
— Mr George Gough att sea	p' Mr Thomas Jackson
p' Mr John Cann.	
Mr Thomas Cole att Nevis	
p' Mr Richard Champneys	
p' Mr Edward Jones	

Memorandum That at this hall or Court it was voted¹ and ordered that the Address now read and signed by this society be sealed with our Comon seale, and that Mr Mayor and those other Gentlemen being members of this hall, who are going to London as a Comitee from the Citty doe shew the same to his Grace the Duke of Beaufort who has been pleased to honno^r our society by being a member thereof, and to desire his Graces direccion and advise in what manner to deliuer the said address to his Maiestye, and that they follow his Graces direccion in deliuey thereof.²

Also att this Court or Hall William Clutterbuck Esquire Mayor of this Citty was elected and Chosen Master of this society for the yeare ensueing, and was sworne Master accordingly.

Then also Mr John Cary and Mr John Combs were elected and sworne wardens for the same year. Also Mr William Merrick, Mr

¹ Followed by *or* struck through.

² A copy of the Address is found in *Book of Charters II*, 149. The Society congratulated the king on his escape from the late horrid conspiracy (the Rye House Plot), and expressed its intention of doing what it could by its correspondents abroad to detect conspiracies.

Samuel Price, Mr Henry Daniel, Mr Giles Merrick, Mr John Yeamans, Mr Robert Kirke, Mr Henry Willoughby, Mr Meredith Davis, Mr Anthony Swymmer and Mr John Cann, were elected and sworne assistants for the same yeare.

Then also voted that Sir Richard Hart be continued Treasurer for this ensueing yeare.

Also att this hall Mr William Merrick, Mr Mayo^r, Mr Samuel Price, Mr Henry Daniel, Mr John Cary, Mr John Combes, Mr George Hart, Mr William Swymmer, Mr John Yeamans senior, and Mr John Seword were elected and Chosen audito^{rs} to Audit the accompts of Mr Treasurer, Mr Eusebius Brooke and Mr Thomas Jackson our Beadle, the which they or any five or more of them are appointed to doe on or before the tenth day of January next, and in the meane time they are to meete in our Common
p. 221 hall and adjourne att their pleasure vntill their said seuerall accompts be fully audited and their first meeting to be on Munday the twelveth day of November instant by tenn of the Clock in the Forenoon.

Then also Mr Alexander Stockdale was admitted into this Society for that hee was the apprentice of Mr William Merrick the present master.

I doe promise to be obedient to the rules of this society, and will pay the accustomed Fees to Mr Treasurer, and to the Clerke and Beadle
Alex : Stockdall¹

Also Walter Willett son of William² Willett a late member of this society by redempcion is admitted into this Society upon his payment of Forty shillings for his incomb and four shillings six pence to Mr Treasurer and the vsuall Fees to the Clerke and Beadle

I doe promise to be obedient to the rules of this society and will pay the Fine and Fees as above ordered

Walter Willett³

Att the same hall it was voted that Tenn pounds apeece be bestowed towards the redempcion of John Johnson, William Bowry and John Tayler out of their respective slaveries, But the monyes to lye in the Treasurers hands till they are respectively redeemed.

Also that whereas threescore and odd Petitioners doe now

¹ Signature of new member.

² W^m above the line.

³ Signature of new member.

petition to us for releife, It is ordered that the Audito^{rs} of accompts¹ or any five or more of them meete in our Common hall on Munday the twelveth instant att tenn of the clock in the morning, and, if they see cause, to adjourne from time to time till fifteen pounds be distributed according to their discrecions to and amongst such of the petitioners as they shall think fitt, And that Mr Treasurer doe issue out the said Fifteene pounds as they or any Five or more of them shall appoint.

Also then ordered that Five pounds be paid to Mr Nicholas Penwarden by Mr Treasurer as a token of our respects to him for reading prayers att St. Stephens this day and visiting our Almes-folk, and burying them.

Likewise that Five pounds be paid to Mr John Rainstorp as a token of our respects to him for his this dayes sermon att St Stephens aforesaid, and to the Clerke of the said parish six shillings Eight pence, and to the sexton three shillings four pence for their this dayes attendance.

Alsoe ordered that the Four pounds formerly ordered or *p. 222* exhibited to Mr Onions be paid for this present yeare by Mr Treasurer ; but noe longer to continue the payment thereof.

Also ordered that the Master Wardens Assistants and Treasurer or the major number of them doe treate with Charles Chick about his Cottage att Clifton and what bargaine shalbee made by them shalbe binding to this Society.

There follow the signatures of forty-six members²

Hall Book II, 219-222

110. 18 April 1691

ordered that the Clerke buy the statutes of their now Maiesties for the use of the Hall.

Hall Book II, 469

111. A NEW COLLECTOR OF DUTIES

22 June 1691

Then voted and ordered that Mr Thomas Moore be (on his petition now exhibited) admitted in the roomth of Mr Eusebius Brooke deceased our receaver of the duties of wharfage anchorage etc he rendring an account from the 24th instant as said Brooke did For which he shalbe allowed 6¹¹ per centum for what he shall receive for this Hall by virtue of his office.

Hall Book II, 472

¹ *acc^{ts}* in the manuscript, standing for accompts or accounts.

² Until 10 November 1694 it was customary for all members who attended to sign at the end of the Minutes. See p. 64, no. 113.

112. NEW HALL BOOK*10 November 1693*Clerke to buy
Hall booke

ordered that our Clerke doe buy for the use of the Hall a new booke for recording the acts of our seuerall meetinges And also the Acts of the last sessions of Parliament.

*Hall Book II, 54r***113. SIGNING THE BOOK***10 November 1694*order for signing
this booke by
the master
Wardens and
Assistants pro
tempore

Voted that henceforwards the signeing of the Hall booke by the Master Wardens and Assistants for the time being or the majority of them shalbe sufficient without any other members signeing the same.

*Hall Book III, 16***114. BEADLE'S SALARY***12 October 1697*The salary of a
Beadle to be
15^l per annum
and (if a
member) not to
have his vote

Voted that the salary of a Bedell which from henceforth shalbe chosen for this Society shalbe Fiveteene pounds per annum and that noe person who shall be chosen (being a member of this society) shall have his vote in any¹ buiseniess concerning this hall but from henceforth shall be utterly excluded therefrom, and in the said salary is to be included all the former paimentes for attendances on any worke as shalbe appointed by the said hall.

*Hall Book III, 97***115. NEW BEADLE***12 October 1697*Mr Samuell
Gardiner
elected Beadle
in roomth of
Mr Jackson
deceased

Mr² Samuel Gardiner and Mr John Yeamans Brewer putting in their petitions for the office of Beadle of this Hall. It was voted by a maiority that the said Samuel Gardiner be admitted into the said office in the roomth of Mr Thomas Jackson deceased, he giving security by the next hall for his carefull discharge of the said office and his salary to begin from Michaelmas last. And this office to be only dureing the pleasure of this hall. And he is by reason of his office (as former Beadles did) to summon and attend all halls and Committees.

*Hall Book III, 97*¹ any above the line.² Preceded by *voted* struck through.

116. DEFENCE OF THE MASTER

10 November 1698

Whereas Mr Peter Saunders our present Master is presented to defend or indicted for not cleaning of the key,¹ it is ordered that our indictment Clerke doe appeare for him and procure the said Indictment to against the master be quashed and to defend all proceedings thereon and the Master to be defended therefrom at the charge of the Hall. and the thankses thankses to of this Hall is given to the Master for his carefull management of master affaires for these two yeares past.

Hall Book III, 130

117. INCREASE IN BEADLE'S SALARY

17 January 1699

Memorandum That the salary of Samuel Gardner our beadle The Beadles be (not withstanding the former vote of this Hall to the contrary) salary increased in regard of his diligence and the increase of his trouble raised to xx^{li} per annum on 29th (as formerly) to Twenty pounds per annum, and to commence Septemb' ult from Michaelmas last and continue during the pleasure of this Hall.

Hall Book III, 138

¹ Under its lease, the Society was responsible for keeping the Back and Quay in a satisfactory condition.

IV. THE MERCHANTS' HALL

The Merchants' Hall in King Street, Bristol, stood on land originally granted by the Corporation in 1493 to certain merchants and mariners to build a chapel in honour of St. Clement, the patron of navigation.¹ Under Edward VI, the land and chapel passed for a short time into other hands, but were subsequently regranted to the merchants.² Latimer states that the first definite mention of a Hall occurs in 1623-4,³ but there is an earlier reference to it in 1605.⁴ He was under the impression that some time in the seventeenth century the chapel building was replaced by a hall, and he comments with surprise on the fact that no record survives of its erection. In fact, it seems that the original chapel was used as a hall by the seventeenth-century merchants and continued to be so used until the erection, in the eighteenth century, of a new building which was destroyed by enemy action in December 1940 and May 1941. This is borne out by a reference in 1647 to "All that Chappell or Hall, heretofore called or known by the name of St. Clementes Chappell, and now called by the name of the Marchantes Hall and used as their Common Hall for assemblies and meetings of the Company of Marchantes".⁵

Of the following extracts referring to the Merchants' Hall and its contents, the two inventories of 1631 and 1697 give some

¹ The original grant is in the Society's Records. A copy is printed in J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 19-21. The grant was made to thirteen merchants and thirteen mariners as feoffees, to the intent that the *mariners* should rebuild (*de novo edificari*) a certain chapel in honour of St. Clement. Presumably a chapel already existed on the site and had probably been erected by the Gild of Mariners founded in 1445. (Its ordinances are printed in F. B. Bickley, *The Little Red Book of Bristol*, ii, 186-192.) Latimer (*Merchant Venturers*, p. 19, footnote) states that this gild had been founded for the purpose of erecting a chapel, but the Ordinances do not specifically state this.

² The Mariners' Gild was no doubt one of the religious gilds dissolved under Edward VI. On 5 December 1550 the property was granted by letters patent to Sir Ralph Sadleir and Laurence Winnington, who regranted it, on 10 October 1553, to Edward Pryn, the first Master of the Merchant Venturers. The property was subsequently granted to a number of other merchants as trustees. Thus the chapel which had originally been mainly the concern of the Gild of Mariners came into the hands of the Society of Merchants. The various grants can be found in the Merchants' Records, Box 5, bundle A2.

³ J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, p. 153.

⁴ See p. 54, no. 93. For what may be an earlier reference, see p. 82, no. 163, and note 4. For repairs to the Hall, 1610-11, see p. 67, no. 118.

⁵ *Book of Charters II*, 43; Merchants' Records, Box 5, bundle A2.

picture of the setting in which the merchants' meetings took place in the seventeenth century. The inventory of 1631 includes an interesting list of the records then in the Hall.

The Merchants' Hall in King Street must not be confused with Spicer's Hall or the Back Hall on the Welsh Back to which foreigners were required to bring their goods.

118. 1610-11

more for reparacions done to the Hawle and other places this yeere 002 06 04

. . . more for ij.¹¹ xiiij^a : iiiij^d Receyved of James Younge for one yeeres Rent of the great storehouse vnder the merchantes hawle ending the xxixth of September anno 1611 002 13 04

Book of Trade : General Account 1610-11

119. 1615-16

more paid for Reparacions done at the hall, schoole, and Almshouse¹ this yeere as by the particulers appeareth² the some 000 15 08

Book of Trade : General Account 1615-16

120. 1616-17

more paid for makinge Cleane the marchantes hall and for wood and Coles spent there on the Court day 000 02 08

Book of Trade : Edmund Browne's Account 1616-17

121. 1617-18

more paide for reparacions done to the merchantes hawle and Almshouse 001 17 03

Book of Trade : Edmund Browne's Account, 1617-18

122. 1623-24

Alsoe this yeare the Hall of this Societie was wainscotted at the Charge of the Company Mr Richard Longe beinge Treasurer and the Auditt Dynner appointed to bee kept in the hall.

Book of Charters I, 96

¹ For the almshouse and school, see Section VII.

² *ap'eth* in the manuscript.

123. 1624-25

Item paide for a paire of brasse Andirons and Dogges ¹ with carriage from London	005 14 08
Item paide for the Coveringe of the Andirons	000 06 04
Item paide for the newe table borde	005 00 00
Item paide for carvinge and paintinge of the kinges Armes	002 14 06

Treasurer's Book I, 11

124. 2 May 1631

more for iij ¹¹ v ⁸ paide for 15 yardes of broade diaper ² for table clothes and towells for the bordes in the hall at iiij ⁸ iiij ^d the yarde	003 05 00
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Treasurer's Book I, 16

125. 1630-31

more for v ¹¹ : xv ⁸ : v ^d for lxix yardes $\frac{1}{4}$ of narrowe diaper for table napkins at xx ^d the yarde amounteth	005 15 05
more for iij ¹¹ : xij ⁸ for 8 yardes of broade damaske for a table cloth for the longe borde at ix ⁸ the yarde	003 12 00
more for v ¹¹ : viij ⁸ for xxxvj yardes of damaske for napkins and a towell for the same borde at iij ⁸ per yarde amounteth	005 08 00
more ³ for ix ⁸ paide for a dosen of Course napkins stript with blewe	000 09 00
more for twoe ells of broade Canvas for dishclowtes	000 01 10
more for xxxiiij ⁸ . x ^d paid Richard Griffeths wife for makeinge markeing and washeinge of the three table clothes three towells and seaven dosen of napkins as per her note	001 13 10

*Treasurer's Book I, 16*126. A note of thinges apperteyninge to the Woorschipful Societie of marchantes adventurers of the Cittie of Bristoll this xijth Decem-ber anno 1631

¹ A utensil consisting of an iron bar sustained horizontally at one end by an upright pillar or support, usually ornamented or artistically shaped, at the other by a short foot; a pair of these were placed one at each side of the hearth to support burning wood.

² A linen fabric woven with a small and simple pattern.

³ Preceded by *for* struck through.

In the Hall and Inner Roomes

Inprimis one longe Drawinge table borde with twoe leaves and ij Trippètes.¹

- One² other longe table borde without leaves
 - One newe shorte table borde without leaves in the Inner Roome
- One paire of brasse Andirons with brasse Creepers,³ slice and tonges
- twoe longe Carpettes of straked stuffe ; and one ould carpett
 - One short carpett for the side borde of straked stuffe newe
- twoe dosen and a halfe of newe Cushions, and eighte ould cushions
 - one longe chest to keepe the Cushions in
- one standinge Cupboard, and eightene Joyned stoolés
 - one longe table cloth of damaske and twoe dosen of damaske table napkins and one side borde cloth diaper
 - twoe other table clothes of diaper and fower dosen of diaper napkins
- One longe towell of damaske and two others of diaper
 - one dosen Course napkins for the servitours
 - one square boxe to holde the linnen with locke and key
 - one other square boxe with artificiall Flowers and 14 dosen trenchers
- 3 three longe formes and twoe short ones and one other table borde vpon tressells in the Innermoste roome
 - the chest with three lockes and keys wherein are the Charters and other writinges concerninge the Company
 - the shelves in the buttrye and Almeshouse kitchen and j ould⁴ table borde, and one side borde in the great hall
- + Item one standishe of tynne, twoe bookes of Actes⁵ and one Liger booke with a case of greene leather,⁶ and one newe booke of wharfage entries⁷
- + One other great booke with Coppies of letters and breviattes of accomptes bound in leather with a buffe Cover⁸

¹ A trippet or trivet.

² The lines and crosses before some of the items were presumably made when the inventory was checked.

³ A small iron 'dog', of which a pair were placed on the hearth between the andirons.

⁴ Followed by *bourd* struck through.

⁵ Only one of these seems to have survived.

⁶ This does not seem to have survived.

⁷ The earliest surviving wharfage book begins in 1654.

⁸ This is the *Book of Trade*.

One large booke of accomptes for the Treasouro¹
 the kinges armes Cutt in Tymber in Colours
 the princes armes, and Citty Armes, and the marchantes Armes,
 in Frames in their proper Colours and the pattent vnder the
 Herauld seale of Armes vnto the Company of marchantes for
 bearinge Armes

A table of benefacto^{rs} and another of the Rates of Fees in the
 Custome house

a table of Fees which ought to bee taken by the pilottes of the
 River

Item one Corslett² with lases and hedpiece

Item a paire of small Creepers of Iron to beare vp the wood

The Tenth of November 1668

An accompt of things added to the former Inventory by an
 order of the Haule made the Two and twentieth day of July Anno
 Domini 1668

p. 2 In primis Two suites of diaper conteyning Two long Table
 clothes, Two long Towells, one sidebord Cloth and Five dosens
 of Table Napkins. All marked M H

+ Item thirteene Leather Chayres

+ Item one new straked Carpett.

+ Item Two silver Tankards.

Book of Charters I, 1, 2

127. 1632-33

more for x^s. paide Richard Griffeths wife for washe-
 inge the hall lynnyn in May. and for scowreing the
 Andirons

000 10 00

more for iiij^s. vj^d paide Richard Griffeth which hee
 paide the plomber for foddering and mending the
 gutters over the hall

000 04 06

Treasurer's Book I, 19

128. 2 October 1647

Water Bucketts to be provided Alsoe at this Courte it is voted and agreed, That according to
 Mr Maior^{rs} orders, Thirty water Buckettes shalbee provided and
 put up in the Hall, for preventinge of dangers of fire.

Hall Book I, 103

¹ The earliest Treasurer's Book.

² Armour for the breast or back.

129. 22 August 1663

By monys paid William Flesher For drawinge Alderman Joseph Jacksons pictter¹ 3¹¹ and for hanginge it in the hall is

003 01 00

Treasurer's Book II, 16

130. 22 July 1668

Alsoe at this Courte, it is voted, That two suites of diaper for the Tables of the Haule, thirteene chayres and one new Carpett be forthwith provided for the vse of the Haule att the chardge of the Haule

Hall Book I, 432

131. 1669-70

paid for drawing Alderman Vickris² his picture 03 10 00

Paid for 2 peces of Plate presented Sir Humphrey

Hooke and Sir John Knight³

22 07 02

Treasurer's Book II, 26

132. 27 May 1669

Alsoe at this Courte, it is voted and ordered, That the Haule dore and porch shalbe rayسد and decently rebuilte at the chardge of the Haule in such manner as it shalbe ordered and directed by the Master and Wardens.

Hall Book I, 444

133. 1 March 1683

The master is desired to consult with workmen about the altering or rebuilding of our Hall and to make his report att next Hall.

Hall Book II, 212

134. The 7th day of December 1697

A particuler of the plate implements utensills ornaments and other thinges belonging to the Merchants-Hall which were then deliuered to the care and custody of Samuel Gardner their Beadle (viz^t)

Two silver Tankards one bigg the other small with the merchants armes engraven on them

¹ He had given £5 4s. per annum to the poor of the Almshouse. *Book of Charters II, 5.*

² Alderman Richard Vickris had given a shilling a week to relieve a poor woman in the Almshouse. *Book of Charters II, 5.*

³ M.P.s for Bristol who had been assisting the Society in its effort to renew the Charter.

Two diaper table cloathes and one diaper side board cloth
 Four dosen Diaper napkins
 g'¹ two long towells
 nine Cushions
 thirteene leather chaires
 two Carpetts of straked stuffe
 two table boards
 one side board
 eighteen joint stooles
 two paire of brass andirons
 one paire of Creepers
 a table of Benefactors and table of searchers Fees²
 the Kings armes cutt in timber
 the City armes, *merchants* armes, and Princes armes in Frames.
 One slice and tongs
 one Long Chest
 two Chests with three locks and keys
 one Cuppboard and all the shelves in the buttry
 Twenty five Bucketts
 the benefactors pictures in frames³ (scilicet)
 Alderman Whitson Alderman Vickris
 Alderman Kitchen Alderman Jackson and
 Alderman Long Alderman Browne
 two armour peices
 armes for two men Musquet, Pike, bandilers, two belts and two
 swords
 six pewter candlesticks
 two pewter chamberpotts
 one paire of brass snuffers and snuffe pann
 one hour glass and hammer
 a draught of the shipp Monke⁴
 The tree of knowledge in a frame⁵ and a platt or draught of
 their Mannor of Clifton

Sam : Gardner⁶
Hall Book III, 101

¹ Marginal note, possibly standing for *gone*.

² The Searcher was authorized by letters patent to examine out-going cargoes. There were continual disputes with the merchants over his fees. See pp. 248, 255.

³ The pictures were destroyed by enemy action, with the exception of Whitson's, which had been presented to the Red Maids' School in the early eighteenth century. See J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, 221.

⁴ See p. 117, no. 238.

⁵ See p. 117, no. 238.

⁶ Signature.

135. 1701 John Hawkins {Samuell Bayly Mercer } Brothers¹
Brewer {Richard Bayly Soapboiler }

This Year the Merchants Rebuilt their Hall, and have made it the most convenient and beautiful of any in the City.²

Bristol Record Office : MS. Calendar no. 07831

¹ The names of the Mayor and Sheriffs.

² The Beadle's Account 1700-1701 shows £221 8s. 9d. spent on building the Hall, and another £360 6s. 3d. was spent in the next year. For later and more extensive building and alterations, see J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 221, 222.

V. DINNERS, HOSPITALITY, AND PRESENTS

The first of the Society's Audit Dinners of which we have record was held in the Bell Inn in 1611 and the bill came to £8 1s. 1d.¹ In 1624 it was decided to hold the dinner henceforth in the Hall, which had been recently wainscoted.² The cost rose considerably as the century went on. In 1660, for example, the bill amounted to £25 3s. 6d., with another £6 16s. 0d. for wine, while in 1684 the total amount was £56 15s. 0d. No details of seventeenth-century menus seem to have been preserved, but a detailed bill from the early eighteenth century is printed below.

The *Beadle's Books* contain a considerable number of references to small amounts spent when the various Committees met at one or other of the Bristol Inns, and there are at least two references to a Committee meeting at a coffee-house.

As the following extracts show, the Society undertook a certain amount of entertainment and made a number of presents to those who had been or who might be of service to it. On occasions this could be expensive, but in general the Society was both judicious and economical in its outlay on entertainments and gifts.

136. 1611-12

more paie to Mr Whitehead for xxxv gallons of	
Choice secke ³ which was bestowed on Mr Ham Towne	
clarke ⁴ in respect of his paines for the Company	003 11 00
more paie for a full bounde Caske to putt the same	
in	000 02 06

Book of Trade : General Account 1611-12

137. 1615-16

more paid for Rosemary and other strueinges to	
dresse the hall against the last meeting and for charre-	
coale for the fire, and for wyne sugar fruite and	
manchettes ⁵ at the ending of the last yeeres accompt is	000 10 10

¹ See p. 85, no. 164.

² See p. 67, no. 122.

³ Sack.

⁴ Hierom Ham, Town Clerk 1581-1621.

⁵ The finest kind of wheaten bread.

more paid to the poore the same tyme for that there
was noe dynner 000 02 08

Book of Trade : General Account 1615-16

138. 1617-18

Andrew Charlton of Bristoll marchant and Treasurer
to the Company of marchantes of the same Citty is due
vj¹¹ ij^s payd m^{rs} Marye Bell the 21th of Nouember
1617 for the marchantes dinners as by accompt 006 02 00
... more xvj¹¹ x^s payd (viz) 15¹¹ 10^s to Mr Humphry
Browne for a pipe of Canarye wine bought of William
Fitzharbat, and giuen to the Lord heighe Stuard of
Bristoll,¹ and xx^s payd Mr Whitsonne for the Carriadg
of the sayd pipe. July 7th 1618 016 10 00

Treasurer's Book I, 4

139. 1619-20

Inprimis xiiij¹¹ xij^s vj^d paide to William Fitzharbert
for a dinner at the bell² the last auditt for the whole
Company 013 12 06

Treasurer's Book I, 6

140. 1620-21

more paide iiij¹¹ ix^s vj^d for a present given to Sir
Clement Edmondes³ 0004 09 06
... more paide for the dynner at the bell at the
generall auditt and meetinge of the Company the 17th
of December anno 1621 0010 05 00

Treasurer's Book I, 7

141. 1623-24

more for 5¹¹. 10^s 10^d. paide for 52¹¹. $\frac{1}{2}$ of refine sugar
and 2 boxes of marmelade, and 22¹¹ drye succades⁴
sent to the Lord Chiefe Barron in January. 1623 005 10 10
more for vj^s. paide the messenger for carrieng it
thither 000 06 00

Treasurer's Book I, 10

¹ William, Earl of Pembroke, Lord High Steward of Bristol 1613-30.

² Probably the Bell Inn, Broad Street, burnt down March 1672.

³ 1564?-1622. Clerk to the Council, and willing to take presents to promote the interests of suitors. See *Cal. S.P.D. 1619-1623*, pp. 172, 255.

⁴ Sweetmeats of candied fruit.

142. November 1659

15th For The Dinner on the 10th of November last to
Mr Farley 023 18 06
For wine to Mr Hurne for the dinner as per note 005 14 00

Treasurer's Book II, 11

143. November 1660

For the dinner on the 10th of November last to Mr
Samuell Farley as per his note and receipt is 025 03 06
For wine to Mr Robert Sheward as per note and
receipt is 006 01 06

Treasurer's Book II, 12

144. November 1661

By monys payd Mr Samuell Farley 25¹¹ : 01^s : 06^d
and Mr Robert Sheward 5¹¹ : 3^s : 10^d For Provisions
and wine for the Hall dinner the 14th of November last 030 05 04

Treasurer's Book II, 13

145. November 1668

To Mrs Elizabeth Sheward for the hall dinners 30¹¹
and wine 9¹¹² the 10th of November 1668 39 00 00

Treasurer's Book II, 24

146. 22 July 1668

It is alsoe voted, That if any of the Nobility now resident in
Bathe shall come to this Citty, That then the Master shall pro-
vide a Collacion for them at the Haule without summoning the
Haule, and the chardge thereof to be defrayed by the Haule.

Hall Book I, 432

147. 19 January 1669

Jan^r. 19 paid Thomas Hinton for 2 hogsheads³ sack
and charges sent to the Duke of Albemarle⁴ 34 05 00

Treasurer's Book II, 25

¹ 30¹¹ above the line.

² 9¹¹ above the line.

³ A hogshead was sixty-three gallons of wine.

⁴ This was in connexion with the attempt to get the charter confirmed.

148. 1670-71

To Mr Jacob and Mr Linton for wine sent to London
and spent for the halls use 09 16 06

. . . To Mr Robert Aldworth¹ a member of the
Company as a present given him by the hall he being
Reader at Lincolnes Inne 40 00 00

Treasurer's Book II, 27

149. 1671-72

paid Mrs Sheward for the hall dinner and wine the
11th of November 1672 39 00 00

Treasurer's Book II, 28

150. 1672-73

paid Mrs Sheward for the Banquet and wines for
entertaining the Lord marquis of Worcester being
Lord Liffenant of this Citty² 53 00 00

paid Mr Edward Thorne more for wine at that time 14 12 00

paid Mr Merredith for sweet meates then 8 10 00

paid Sir Robert Yeamans which was expended for
powder firing of gunns at that time 14 19 06

Treasurer's Book II, 29

151. 1680-81

To an Entertainement to my Lord Marquis 018 04 00

Treasurer's Book II, 41

152. 1681-82

To : Mr Cadogans. noate per the Dinner 050 90 00

Treasurer's Book II, 42

153. 6 September 1682

Memorandum that att this Hall it was voted and ordered That
the right honourable the Lord Marquesse of Worcester and his
sonn the Lord Herbert (members of this society) be invited to
and treated with a collation in our Common Hall att their coming
to this Citty on munday next And the mannagement thereof is
left to the master wardens and Mr Treasurer.

Hall Book II, 200

¹ Town Clerk of Bristol, 1653-1676. Member of the Society, 1654.

² Henry, Marquis of Worcester, later Duke of Beaufort, became Lord
Lieutenant of Somerset and Bristol in 1672.

154. 1683-84

To : Mr Cadogan per wine for	21 ¹¹ : 10 : 00	} 033 . 00 . 00
sweat meats etc		
Entertaining the Duke	11 : 10 : 00	} 056 15 00
To : Mr Cadogan per noate p : Dinner		

Treasurer's Book II, 44

155. 1687

December 8	paid Mr Richard Champneys for wine when the master with others did Auditt the Accounts ¹	00 12 00
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Beadle's Book I, 7

156. 1689

February 7 ^o	spent at the Star tavern on the Key when the master with others mett to pay Mr Caduggan for the hall dinner	000 : 10 : 00
19	spent at the 3 Tun taverne ² when the committee met about the searcher	000 : 06 : 10

Beadle's Book I, 15

157. March 15	spent at Margaret Browns when the Committee went to the well ³	000 : 04 : 06
	the same day spent at the Star on the key when they came home	000 : 11 : 00

Beadle's Book I, 15

158. April 23	paid at the Crown taverne in high streete when the Committee met	000 : 04 : 10
July 9	paid in severall places in Clifton when the said comittee went to survey the land	000 : 05 : 10

Beadle's Book I, 15

159. 1689

November 13	spent when the Committee went to Clifton at the Bears Head and Bell taverne in Broad street	000 : 18 : 06
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*Beadle's Book I, 16*¹ *Acc^o* in the manuscript.² In Corn Street.³ The Hot Well.

160. 1694

		£	s.	d.
Imprimis.	Spent the auditt day in the Hall in beere	000	03	00
November	30th Spent at Fosters Coffee house ¹ on Committees about Searcher ²	000	02	09
December	For a double draft of Wood	000	05	08
	3 ^o Spent the Second time at Fosters Coffee house	000	02	08

Beadle's Book I, 65

161. 1696-97

December	paid for Drums and Collours for the Crane	£-	02	-	4
	Spent in the hall in beer links and candles	£-	04		6
Jan ^{ry} 15	paid Mr Lewis Adams of the Bell taverne when the Committee mett about trade	£-	13	-	7

Beadle's Book I, 71

162. 10 November 1715

To Henery Watts Esquier Presedent	11	s	d
for 15 Cupel of Capons	04	09	0
for 23 Cupel of Cramd Pullets	04	00	6
for 3 Cupel of Turkeys	00	18	0
for 4 Piggs	00	16	0
for Backon	01	00	8
for 3 fore Chines	00	06	1
for meat for the Hall and Poor	01	11	2
for a Peck of salt ³	00	01	3
for 2 Dozen of Butter	00	12	0
for frute for the Table and sace	00	14	0
for Lemmons	00	03	0
for the Grand sallet	01	05	0
for french Bread	00	10	0
for Loafs and Roles for the Poor	00	06	8
for Garden stuf Oynons and silloroy	00	06	6
for the Ues of knives and forks	00	10	0

¹ See J. Latimer, *Eighteenth Century Annals*, p. 241.² See pp. 248, 255.³ Tear in the manuscript.

80 THE MERCHANT VENTURERS

for the Ues of Pruter ¹	02	10	0
for the Ues of Cruets salts mustard poots	00	03	0
for flower paper and spice	00	02	6
for salte mustard peepper and Vineger	00	02	6
for Cole	00	04	0
for Charcole	00	00	8
for Great wood and fackets	00	01	0
for Rosen for the Piggs	00	00	4
for shuger and Currants	00	02	6
for scuers and Candels	00	01	0
for Brann	00	00	8
for a Chees for the Hall	00	02	6
for 3 Pasteys	00	18	0
for mins Pies	03	00	0
for Corporation Pudings	01	10	00
for Helpers and Porters	01	06	0
for my self	03	00	0
for a fork Lost	00	00	6
for 4 Cruets Brocke	00	00	10
for Victuals and Beer for the Helpers	00	07	0
for 4 Plates Lost	00	03	4
	<hr/>		
	32	04	0
	<hr/>		

Merchants Hall 10 November 1715

Sir/

Pray pay unto Mrs Sarah Herbert two and thirty pounds and four shillings in full of the above note

Your humble servant

Henry Watts

To Mr Robert Earle
Treasurer.

*Merchants' Records*²

¹ *Sic.*

² This bill is in a frame hanging in the Merchants' House, Clifton.

VI. THE MERCHANTS' ACCOUNTS

Some general comments on the Society's financial position in the seventeenth century have been made in the Introduction.¹ The numerous accounts which have been preserved are an interesting source of information concerning activities of the merchants and one which was not always made sufficient use of by Latimer in his history of the Society.

The earliest General Accounts are found at one end of the *Book of Trade*, which also contains a number of accounts of the Collector of the Hall's Duties. The first *Treasurer's Book* gives the Treasurer's Accounts from 1617/18 to 1632/33, and the second runs from 1646 to 1718. The earliest surviving volume of the Beadle's Accounts covers the years 1686 to 1709.

Of the accounts printed here, the first—that of John Barker for the year 1583/4—is not an account of the Society of Merchant Venturers of Bristol, but of the Bristol branch of the Spanish Company.² It is found in the first of the Society's *Treasurer's Books* and this fact, as well as its intrinsic interest, justifies its reproduction here. The second account—that of 1610/11—is the earliest surviving account of the Society. No. 165 is the Collector's Account for 1617/18 and is one of a number of such accounts between 1617 and 1630 which provide interesting details of the Society's expenditure and which account for certain money not all of which appeared in the *Treasurer's Book*. The Treasurer's Account of 1665/66 has been printed by way of contrast with that of 1610/11. The last document in this section is the Beadle's General Account for the year 1697/8. In the *Beadle's Book* this is supplemented by a number of subsidiary accounts, but there is no room to reproduce them here.

These accounts were supported by a large number of notes and vouchers, but hardly any of them have been preserved for the seventeenth century.

163. JOHN BARKER'S ACCOUNT 1583

Accompt of Redye monyes disimborsed to the yowse of the company of marchantes of by³ Bristoll Tradinge Spayne and Portingall by John Barker Tresore⁴ anno 1583

¹ See pp. xxv–xxviii.

² See p. xiv.

³ *Sic.*

⁴ *Sic.*

The company oweth ¹ the xiiij of Awgvst ij ¹¹ xij ^s iiij ^d and is for so moch payd vnto Mr Hartley mesenger for Rest of x ¹¹ allowd him by the company	002 ¹¹ 12 ^s 04 ^d
moore oweth the xix th of Desember j ¹¹ and is for so muche geven to Mr Johnes preacher ² by the company	001 ¹¹ 00 ^s 00 ^d
moore oweth v ^s and is so mvche geven to the vnderkeeper of Nugate by the company ³	000 ¹¹ 05 ^s 00 ^d
more oweth ij ^s vj ^d for coles boght by William Kirk for the hale ⁴	000 ¹¹ 02 ^s 06 ^d
moore oweth vj ^s x ^d for ij boockes for accomptes	000 ¹¹ 06 ^s 10 ^d
moore oweth v ¹¹ for a hogshed ⁵ of Secke to the mayo ^r by the depvties order	005' 00 ^s 00 ^d
for the depvties ⁶ fees the whole yeere x ¹¹	010 ¹¹ 00 ^s 00 ^d
for the Secretaries Fees the whole yeere iiij ¹¹	004 ¹¹ 00 ^s 00 ^d
for the beedels Fees the whole yeer iiij ¹¹	003 ¹¹ 00 ^s 00 ^d
for the keeper of Nvgatt ⁷ his fee j ¹¹	001 ¹¹ 00 ^s 00 ^d
for the Tresores Fee beeing ij ¹¹	002 ¹¹ 00 ^s 00 ^d
for j ^s to John Morgan for arestinge Mr Carrs barrillis	000 ¹¹ 01 ^s 00 ^d
for arestinge halinge and coylinge a cabell of John Vaghanis iiij ^d	000 ¹¹ 00 ^s 04 ^d
for my charges to London twice beeing assistant Jenerall vj ¹¹ xij ^s iiij ^d	006 13 ^s 04 ^d
Accompt of Redye monyes <i>Receivede</i> by John Barker Tresorer To the Companye of marchantes Tradinge Spaine and Portingall begon the xxiiij of Jvne anno 1583	
Ys dew per contra vij ^s vi ^d <i>Received</i> of William Bolton for his freedom the xxiiij of Jvne 1583	000 ¹¹ 07 ^s 06 ^d
of William Hort for his freedom the same daye ⁸ vij ^s vj ^d	000 ¹¹ 07 ^s 06 ^d
of Beniamin Robertes for his Freedom the same daye vij ^s vj ^d	000 ¹¹ 07 ^s 06 ^d

¹ *oweth* in manuscript. It can be extended in various ways.

² *prcher* in the manuscript.

³ The reason for this payment to the underkeeper of Newgate does not appear.

⁴ Presumably *hall*. If so, this seems to be the earliest reference to the Merchants' Hall.

⁵ Hogshead. Sixty-three gallons.

⁶ The Spanish Company's constitution provided for a President and a number of assistants or deputies.

⁷ It is not clear why this payment was made to the keeper of Newgate.

⁸ *the same daye* written twice.

of Edward Carr for his freedom the same day vij ^s vj ^d	000 ¹¹ 07 ^s 06 ^d
of Lewis Jenkin of Nvport for his Freedom the same day v ¹¹	005 ¹¹ 07 ^s 6 ^{d1}
of Walter Abroll of Nvport for his Freedom the same day vij ^s vj ^d	000 ^{li} 07 ^s 6 ^d
The xxvij of Julye <i>Receivede</i> of Richard Stradlinge of Brigewater For his Freedom	000 ¹¹ 07 ^s 06 ^d
of Emanvell Nvport for his fredom the same day vij ^s vj ^d	000 ¹¹ 07 ^s 06 ^s
of William Jhones of Haverfordwest for his Fine x ^s <i>Received</i> the same day	000 ¹¹ 10 ^s 0 ^d
of George Eynon of Haverford ij ¹¹ for his fine the same day	002 00 ^s 0 ^d
of Rise Prickett of Tinby for his fine the same day j ¹¹	001 00 ^s 00 ^d
of William John Roser of Nvport for his fine the same day ij ¹¹	003 00 ^s 00 ^d
of Alexander Lewis of Carlion for his fine the same daye j ¹¹	001 ¹¹ 00 ^s 00 ^d
of John Tanner of Cardiffe for a fine the same daye ij ¹¹	002 ¹¹ 00 ^s 00 ^d
of Morgan Powell of Penbrocke for his fine the same day ij ¹¹	002 ¹¹ 00 ^s 00 ^d
The viij th of Awgvst of John Gascon of Nvport for his fine v ^s	000 ¹¹ 05 ^s 00 ^d
of John Joones of Nvport the same daye for his fine v ^s	000 ¹¹ 05 ^s 00 ^d
The xiiij of Awgvst of Thomas James of Carlion for his fine j ¹¹	001 ¹¹ 00 00
of Henri Jhones of Bridgewater for his fine the same daye v ¹¹	005 ¹¹ 00 ^s 00 ^d
of William Pettijohn of Comenidge ² for his fine x ^s the same day	000 ¹¹ 10 ^s 00 ^d
the xxix th of Awgvst of Seethe Taylor for his Freedom vij ^s vj ^d	000 ¹¹ 07 ^s 6 ^d
of Luck Garnawe of Gloster for his fyne ³ v ¹¹	005 ¹¹ 00 ^s 00 ^d

¹ The 7s. 6d. was added in error by clerk.

² The word appears to be Comenidge, but there is some doubt. Possibly it is intended to be Comwindge in Somerset on the river Parret below Bridgewater.

³ *Freedom* deleted. *fyne* above the line followed by another word which is not legible.

of John Tanner of Cardiffe for his freedom the same daye	000 ¹¹ 07 ^s 6 ^d
of John Waere for his fine the same daye v ^s	000 ¹¹ 05 ^s 00 ^d
The xxviiij of Novemb. Received of the Tresore ^r of Brigewater for the Innposions ¹ iiiij ¹¹ iiiij ^s	004 ¹¹ 04 ^s 00 ^d
The x th of March Received of John Clarke for his Freedom vij ^s vj ^d	000 ¹¹ 07 ^s 06 ^d
of Israell Glyton for his freedom the same day vij ^s vj ^d	000 ¹¹ 07 ^s 06 ^d
of George Wilkins for his Freedom the same day vij ^s vj ^d	000 ¹¹ 07 ^s 06 ^d
of Arthur Panter for his fredom the same day vij ^s vj ^d	000 ¹¹ 07 ^s 06 ^d
of Thomas Aldworth hee paid for a fine the same daye ij ¹¹ x ^s	002 ¹¹ 10 ^s 00 ^d
The vij of May of William Greves for his freedom vij ^s vj ^d	000 ¹¹ 07 ^s 06 ^d
of William Cole for his freedom the same daye vij ^s vj ^d	000 ¹¹ 07 ^s 6 ^d

Accompt of detes dew to the company as appeerethe by bills and otherwise att the deliveringe vpp of John Barkers account the which were delivered² vnto Thomas Pitt tresure for this yere 1584.

Inprimis for x ¹¹ dew by Richard Basse and John Hart as appearethe by his bill	010 ¹¹ 00 ^s 00 ^d
+for v ¹¹ dew by John Moris of Carmarthen as by his bill	005 ¹¹ 00 ^s 00 ^d
+for j ¹¹ dew by Jenkin Davis of Havifordwest for the which Mr Pepwall gave his word	001 ¹¹ 00 ^s 00 ^d
for j ¹¹ dew by Morgan Merricke of st Tvlleys for which Mr Pepwell gave his word	001 ¹¹ 00 ^s 00 ^d
for ij ¹¹ William Hopkins the younger oweth for a fine which entrid into bond to pay as appeereth	002 ¹¹ 00 ^s 00 ^d
for xl ¹¹ John Over of Dunster oweth as per his obligasion	040 ¹¹ 00 ^s 00 ^d

Treasurer's Book I, iv, 2, 2v

164. THE GENERAL ACCOUNT 1610-11

1611

The generall accompte of all paymentes for one whole yeare ended the last daie of September Anno domini 1611.

¹ ? Impositions.

² *dd'* in the manuscript.

The Woorshipfull Company of marchantes adven- turers of the Citty of Bristoll oweth for money disbursed for there vse viz the 5th of November 1610 for the charges of a dinner at the Bell ¹ at the last Auditt	008 01 01
more paide for the charges of John Griffith merchant with Mr Prin, ² and sixe other maisters and tenne marriners whoe were apointed to veiwe the channell	002 01 00
more paide to relieve Henry Knighte in his sicknes and for his buriall	000 07 06
more paide to Thomas Griffith gouldsmith for the fee farme of the Roapehouse and spinning way at Marshes streat gate to the vse of the Company ³	045 00 00
more paide for five draughtes of wood against Christetide ⁴ for the Almespeople	000 13 04
more paide for halling the same wood at iij ^d the draught	000 01 03
more paide to Mr Robert Aldworth towards the furnishing of 100 ¹¹⁵	001 00 00
more paide to Mr Thomas Pitt Chamberlaine by order of Mr Kitchen	021 00 00
more paide for lock and key to the gardein doare	000 01 06
more paide for CCC foote of ij ynches $\frac{1}{2}$ plancke for the more better discharge and rechargde of shippinge	001 16 00
more for reparacions done to the Hawle and other places this yeere	002 06 04
more paide Mr Henry Robertes for halfe a yeeres benevolence	004 00 00
more paide the widowe Robertes his wife for halfe a yeeres benevolence	001 00 00
more paide the poore people of the marchantes Almeshouse of the guifte of Mr Alderman Hopkins and m ^{rs} Synnottes yeerly ⁶	000 13 04

¹ Probably the Bell Inn, Broad Street.

² See p. 137, no. 276.

³ For the various indentures regarding this property owned by the Society, see Merchants' Records, Box 5, bundle A3.

⁴ *Xpetide* with a line denoting contraction.

⁵ Probably interest on a loan.

⁶ John Hopkins, executor of the last will and testament of Mrs. Margery Synott of London, with £6 out of her estate and £4 out of his own pocket, delivered £10 to the Treasurer on condition that the Society should yearly pay 13s. 4d. to the poor in the Merchants' Almshouse.

more paide the saide poore people for meate given them at festivall dayes	000 16 04
more paide to Robert Hamlin towards his Reliefe in his sicknes and for a shrowde and other charges at his buriall	001 00 09
more paide to ould father Rowe towards his reliefe	000 01 00
more paide to a poore marriners wife towards the reliefe of herself and five smale Children by order	000 05 00
more paide to a poore Turkishe marriner by order of the <i>Company</i>	000 03 00
more paide to the poore people of the Almeshouse theire weekly benevolence, viz. to Robert Hamlyn for 26 weekes at j ^s per weeke, Henry Knighte for ix weekes at j ^s : Phillipp Williams for 26 weekes at j ^s : Richard Cotterell for 52 weekes at j ^s : Thomas Rowe for 52 weekes at viij ^d . William Vaughan for 52 weekes at viij ^d , Thomas Bennett for 13: weekes at viij ^d , Widowe Dizell for 52 weekes at viij ^d , widow Roach for 52 weekes at vj ^d : and to Widowe Lyar for 43 weekes at vj ^d , all is	013 12 06
more paide for a shrowde and other funerall chardges to Tho Bennett	000 09 02
more paide the keeper of the slipp at Hungeroad ¹ his fee	002 00 00
more paide the Curat of Sheirhampton his fee ²	002 00 00
more paide goodman Greene for teaching poore marriners Children his fee ³	001 06 08
more paide to Mr Thomas Pitt Chamberleyn for Rent of the Anchoradg etc ⁴	003 06 00
more paide him for a quitt rent out of the Hawle and tenemente in Fisher lane ⁵	000 02 00
more paide him for the spining ground to Gib Tayler ⁶	000 03 04
more paide for rent of a house to keepe the planckes in and for portadge of them in and out at tymes ⁷	001 13 04

¹ Hungroad, a part of the Avon about a mile from its mouth where large vessels usually anchored instead of coming up to the City.

² See p. 116, no. 236.

³ See p. 97.

⁴ See p. 136.

⁵ For this property, see Merchants' Records, Box 5, bundle A2.

⁶ At the junction of the Avon and the Frome.

⁷ Planks used in lading and unlading ships. The Society had a lease of the duty of plankage. See p. 136.

more paide for charges at the Bell at a meetinge of the Companie <i>with</i> Mr Lewys and for drawinge an agreement	000 07 06
more paide to Mr Whitson at his goeing to London about the French Compa ^{a,1}	020 00 00
more paide to Mr Robert Aldworth by order of Mr Kitchen	020 00 00
more paide for a carpett for the hawle, xij Joyned stooles and xij greene Cushions and a Leather chaire	004 13 10
more paide Richard Winter for makings a Writing to aucthoriz Mr Whitson ²	000 02 06
more paide for wood Coales flowers and Rosemary for the Hawle at tymes	000 03 06
more for the yeearyl fee allowed mee by your Woorship ³ for my Collection	006 13 04
more in money and bills to even this accounte is	059 10 03
	<hr/>
	226 14 04
	<hr/>

October 8th 1611

Per Contra is due to the Woorshipfull Company of Marchantes Adventurers of the Cittie of Bristoll the somme of lxxxj¹¹ v^s vij^d beinge the neaterest of the last yeeres account

081 05 07

more x¹¹ and is soe much receyved at the handes of Alderman Hopkins in this manner followeing viz : vj¹¹ of the guifte of Mr^{rs} Margerie Synnottes of London widowe Deceased, and iiij¹¹ of his owne guifte, to the entent that there shalbee yeerely paid for ever unto the poore people of the Almeshouse belonging to the Company of Marchantes in Bristoll for ever the somme of thirtene shillings fower pence per annum to bee paide quarterly

010 00 00

more v¹¹ Receyved of Mr John Harrison for his admittance into the Societie of the saide Company

005 00 00

more for x¹¹: Receyved of Thomas Tayler rope-maker in full payment of the ymplementes and workehouse tooles belonging to the workehouse there

010 00 00

¹ For the French Company, see p. 207.

² The letter of authorization to Whitson to act for the Society in London.

³ *Woo* in the manuscript.

more for ij ¹¹ and is soe much receyved of the said Thomas Tayler for halfe a yeeres rent of the saide workehouse and spinning way ended the xxiiij th of March anno 1610	002 00 00
more for ij ¹¹ receyved of him for halfe a yeeres rent of the same workehouse and way, ending the xxix th September anno 1611, according to a newe lease to him made at vj ¹¹ per annum	003 00 00
more for ij ¹¹ : xij ^s : iiij ^d Receyved of James Younge for one yeeres Rent of the great storehouse vnder the marchantes hawle ending the xxix th of September anno 1611	002 13 04
more for xlvj ¹¹ : iij ^s : ij ^d Receyved this yeere for the dueties of Ankoradge Kannadg and planckadg, ¹ tonnadg to the poore and poundage ¹ of marriners wages ² as per the particulers	046 03 02
more for 64 ¹¹ : xij ^s v ^d : Receyved this yeere for the dueties of ymposicions and wharfadge money : ³ according to the Rates vnder the Citty seale as by the particulers	064 12 05
more ij ¹¹ receyved this yeere of Thomas Celey for one yeeres rent of a tenement in Fisher lane ending the xxix th of September anno 1611	002 00 00
	<hr/>
	226 14 06

Book of Trade

165. THE COLLECTOR'S ACCOUNT 1617-18

Nouember the xvijth 1618

The Worshipfull Companie of Marchantes Aduenturers of the Citty of Bristoll oweth for money disbursed to theire vse from the first day of November anno 1617 to the last day of September anno 1618.

By⁴ Edmond Browne Collecto^r

Inprimis payde for wood cole and other thinges for the hall the last yeere

000 02 03

¹ See p. 136.

² See p. 136.

³ See p. 136.

⁴ Preceded by *viz*⁴ struck through.

more paide for setting vpp of five moareing poastes viz. iij on st Augustin backe and ij on the keyside belowe the Tower ¹	001 15 10
more paide for reparacions done to the <i>merchantes</i> hawle and Almeshouse	001 17 03
more paide to Mr Chamberlaine for the dueties of anckoradg etc ²	003 06 08
more paide him for the quitt rent, and for the spinninge grounde	000 05 04
more paide the Curat of Sheirehampton his fee ³	002 00 00
more paide the keeper of the slipp at Hungeroad his fee	002 00 00
more paide to Thomas Greene his fee for teach- ing poore <i>mariners</i> ⁴ children	002 00 00
more paide to M ^r ^{is} Robertes her yeerely benevolence	002 00 00
more paide to goodwife Freeman her yeerely benevolence	002 00 00
more paid for five draughtes of wood for the Almeshouse and halling it	000 14 07
more paide for meate given the poore people of the Almeshouse on seuerall festivall daies this yeere	000 16 05
more paide the poore people of the guifte of m ^r ^{is} Synnottes and Mr Hopkins	000 13 04
more paide to the poore people of the Almeshouse theire weekly benevolence, viz. to John Evered for xlviij weekes at xvj ^d , John Warden for xlviiij weekes at xij ^d , John Hiscockes xlviiij weekes at viij ^d , John Browne xlviiij weekes at viij ^d , Hughe Tiler xlviiij weekes at viij ^d , Thomas Sparkes xliij weekes at j ^s , goodwife Lya: at vj ^d , goodwife Sheppard xlviiij weekes at vj ^d , and to goodman Scampe for xv. weekes at j ^s , all is	015 13 00
more paide for the funerall charges of ould Cotterell and his wife	000 16 04
more paide to William Haywood cooper towards his sonnes preferment at Oxon'	001 00 00

¹ The Great Tower on the Quay originally erected for the defence of the City. Demolished in 1722.

² See p. 136.

³ See p. 116.

⁴ *m'in's* in the manuscript.

more paide for a yeeres rent for a Celar to keep planckes x ^s	}	001 17 06
more paide to ij porters for helping in and out of the planckes xvj ^s		
more paide for hire of planckes at sundrie tymes vj vj ^d		
more paide for bringing planckes from the Pill that were lost ij ^{s1}		
more paide for mendinge planckes this yeere ij ^s	}	000 04 00
more paide to goodwife Lloyd towards cleaneing the Marchantes Walke ²		
more paide for 5 white boxes to keepe writinges		000 02 04
more paide Richard Griffith to writing and copien letters and other thinges sent to London		000 02 06
more paide for a key for the Almehouse, for mendinge the poores boxe and glasse windowes at the hall, and for reparacions at the artillery house ³		000 04 01
more paide for ij paper bookes which came from London		001 04 06
more paide towards the writinge of this yeere entries and accompt		000 04 00
more paide the yeerely fee allowed mee by your woorships		006 13 04
more paide William Dale for noates out of the Custome house		001 00 00
more paide to Mr Andrewe Charlton Treasouro ^r at fower seuerall tymes since the last accounte		050 00 00
more oweth x ¹¹ iiij ^s ij ^d which is allowed in accompt to Edmond Browne for soe much hee charged himselve the last yeere and could not receyve		010 04 02
more oweth xv ¹¹ : xiiij ^s : ij ^d for soe much resteing oweing by Edmond Browne for the ballance of this account for which hee is made debtor in the next yeeres account follio ⁴		015 13 02
		<hr/> 124 10 7 <hr/>

¹ Presumably they went into the river and were carried down to Pill.

² A closed-in walk called the Merchants' Tolzey on the north side of All Saints Church.

³ Presumably used by the Trained Bands. For a reference to the Company of the Artillery Yard, see Bristol Record Office: *Great Orphan Books* III, 366v.

⁴ The folio number is not entered.

Per Contra is due to the Worshipfull Company of marchantes adventurers of the Citty of Bristoll the somme of vj¹¹ and is for one yeeres rent of the roape-house workehouse and spinninge waie in the Marshe ending the xxixth September 1618. receyved of Thomas Tailer ropemaker

006 00 00

more ys due ij¹¹ and is for soe much receyved of William Snacknell for one yeeres rent then ending for a Tenement in Fisher lane

002 00 00

more ij¹¹ xiijs^s iiij^d and is soe much receyved of James Young for one yeeres rent of the great storehouse vnder the Hawle

002 13 04

more for the dueties of kannadg planckadg and anckoradg for one whole yeere ending the xxixth of September anno 1618

025 04 06

more for the dueties of tonnadge for the poore for one whole yeere endinge the same tyme

021 10 00

more ys due for the dueties of j^d: vpon euery xx^s marriners wages which have bin collected this yeer

003 18 09

more is due for the dueties of wharfadg ymposed on all sortes of marchandices broughte into this porte, for one whole yeere then endinge

063 04 00

 124 10 07¹

*Book of Trade***166. THE TREASURER'S ACCOUNT 1665-66**

1665

fo. 21

The Right Worshipfull John Willoughby Maior Master

Mr John Aldworth

Mr William Lysons

} Wardens

Mr Robert Yate Treasurer

The merchants hall is debtor. 1665

li s d

December 15 To 800 ¹¹ paid in to the Chamber of Bristoll for which they have given the Citty seale to pay 5 per cent dated this 15th of December 1665

800 00 00

January 10 To 20¹¹ paid Richard Ash to pay the pore Almspeople

020 00 00

¹ In this year, the Treasurer Andrew Charlton received £240 7s. 9d. including the amounts shown as paid to him in this account.

feb.	3	To 11 ¹¹ 14 ^s 0 paid Richard Ash which he paid for worke done at the schoole howse etc belonging to the hall	011 14 00
	10	To Jo. Pearce, widdow Hill, and Mrs Hosier given by the <i>Company</i>	001 15 00
		To Sam : Farley for the quarter hall dinner	004 00 00
1666			
April	7	To 20 ¹¹ paid Richard Ashe to pay the poore Almpeople	020 00 00
may	10	To 3 ¹¹ 12 ^s 0 ^d paid John Evans the mason for mending of the key by order of the master	003 12 00
	11	To 50 ¹¹ paid Sir John Knight for Charges in deffending the buisenes about Currans agaynst the Levant <i>Company</i> ¹	050 00 00
		To 17 ¹¹ 18 ^s 6 ^d paid for 2 silver Tankards presented to Sir John Knights Ladye for his care etc in the Curran buisenes ²	17 18 06
	18	To 6 ¹¹ paid Mr Robert Aldworth for his paynes and expences	06 00 00
	19	To 10 ¹¹ paid Mr Ashe to pay the pore Almspeople	10 00 00
June		To William Jones for masons worke about the schoole howse	00 17 00
September	19	To 2 ¹¹ given the widdow Conway by the <i>Company</i>	02 00 00
	28	To 10 ¹¹ paid Mr Richard Locke to pay the pore Almpeople	10 00 00
		To John Hartwell for his yeares sallery	06 00 00
		To 5 ¹¹ given by the <i>Company</i> towards Thomas Hawkins Ransome out of captivity	05 00 00
		To Steven Perrey the smith as per his note	00 14 00
		To money spent at Auditting <i>Accounts</i> etc severall times	00 06 02
November	10	To Jo : Fuler, An Pitts, widow Hughes, Joan Darbey and widow Porreman	04 00 00
		To Sam : Farley for the hall dinner this day	32 06 00

¹ See p. 218, no. 439.

² He acted for the Society in its quarrel with the Levant Company over the right to import currants.

To Mr Jonathan Blackwell for wine	07 05 11
To the plomer for worke on the hall	00 07 04
To John Hartwell in full of his yeares sallery and note of disburstments as per noate	03 06 06
To the Ballance hereof carryed into folio 22	217 18 09

Robert Yate

1235 01 02

1665

The merchants hall is Creditor	li s d	fo. 21
Decembr' 14 By 473 ¹¹ 11 ^s 4 ^d the Ballance of Mr Walter Tocknell the former Treasurer his Account as in fo 20	473 11 04	
By Christopher Stephens his Admittance in to the Company	000 04 06	
15 By 450 ¹¹ . Recd of Mr Eusebius Brooke Colector of wharffage ¹	450 00 00	

1666

novemb. 7 By 85 ¹¹ 19 ^s 4 ^d of the said Mr Brooke Colector of wharfage	085 19 04
8 By 81 ¹¹ and 47 ¹¹ Received more of said Mr Brooke	128 00 00
10 By 15 ¹¹ of John Roe for his fine for his Admittance into the Company	15 00 00
23 By 82 ¹¹ 6 ^s Rec ^d more of Mr Eusebius Brooke the Collector of wharfage	82 06 00

1235 01 02

This Accompt was Auditted by vs whose names are vnderwritten
and wee finde the Ballance thereon due vnto the Hall to bee (as
on the other side) the summe of Two hundred and seventeene
pounds, Eighteene shillings and Nine pence which is carried to a
newe 'account in folio (22) this 7th of December 1666 217 18 09

John Knight
William Lysons
William Merricke
Wm Willett²

Treasurer's Book II, 21

¹ See p. xxiv.² Signatures.

167. THE BEADLE'S GENERAL ACCOUNT 1697-98¹

Anno 1698

The Worshippfull Society of merchants adventurers in Bristoll
in account Currant are Debtors

	li	s	d
To Casuall payments and disbursements folio 13	34	13	1
To ordinary payments folio 14	268	16	11
To money paid att Twice treating with Mr Godfry etc at Gilders Inn ²		10	6
To the two Ministers Clerke and Sexton for 1697	5	10	-
To money paid at Bull taverne treating with Mr Hollidge		9	10
To Major Wade for advice about the George Inn ³	-	10	-
To money paid at Gilders Inn sealing Mr Bearpeckers	-	19	6
To money allowed George Norton for Mrs Batten	2	-	-
To money paid Mrs Batten for her ground due 25 March 98	3	8	-
To money allowed Mr John Freke for his trouble about the George Inn	3	6	-
To William Millards note the mason per order	-	11	-
To money paid at Naggs Head taverne at two meeting and setting porters wages and when the Committee mett about auditing accountes	2	4	-
To money paid Mr Bodenham $\frac{1}{2}$ yeeres poore towards building workehouses due 29 ^o September last		15	
To money paid the poore 61 and 62 weekes as may appeare	5	15	0 ⁴
To Clifton rents in arreare	10	-	3
To Bristoll rents in arreare	88	17	4
	428	6	5 $\frac{1}{2}$

Anno 1698

The Worshippfull Society of merchant adventurers in Bristoll
in account Current are Creditors.

¹ The account is supported by a number of subsidiary accounts not printed here.

² Guilders Inn, High Street, Bristol.

³ In Castle Street, Bristol. It had been acquired by the Society.

⁴ Written twice and one of the entries struck through.

By Clifton Rents folio 16	63	4	9
By Rents and annuitys folio 17	337	7	2
By money received of Edward Johns Limeburner	1	-	-
By ballance due this 16th December 1698			
To Samuell Gardner the accomptant	26	14	6½
	<hr/>		
	428	6	5½

Clifton rents in arreare		Bristoll rents in arreare	
John Preston	7 : 10 : 00	Mr Cox a yeere	13 - -
William Giffin	1 : 13 : 0	Mr Martin	44 13 4
widow George	0 : 15 : 0	Mr Cooke Chamberlain	31 4 -
David Lowe	0 : 2 : 3		
	<hr/>		
	10 : 0 : 3		88 : 17 : 4

Memorandum That on this 16th day of December 1698 This account of Mr Samuel Gardner was audited by us whose name are underwritten and there remaines due to the said accomptant to ballance Twenty six pounds fourteen shillings and six pence
 ½ £26 : 14 : 6½

Wm. Daines Mast^r
 Peter Saunders
 John Yeamans
 E Tocknell
 Anth : Swymmer¹

Beadle's Book 1686-1709

¹ Signatures.

VII. CHARITABLE AND EDUCATIONAL WORK

(a) *Charitable Work*

One of the important charitable activities of the Society in the seventeenth century was the maintenance of the Merchants' Almshouse. The duty of supporting a priest and twelve poor mariners had originally been undertaken by a Fraternity of Mariners established in 1445 under the patronage of St. Clement and St. George.¹ In 1493 the Corporation of Bristol granted to thirteen merchants and thirteen mariners a piece of land in the Marsh on which the mariners were to rebuild a chapel in honour of St. Clement,² and on this site was erected an almshouse as well as a chapel. Under Edward VI the land passed into other hands, but it was later regranted to the merchants.³ The chapel of St. Clement became the Merchants' Hall, and the merchants seem to have taken over the care of the almshouse which had originally been the responsibility of the mariners.

The number of seamen and seamen's widows maintained in the Merchants' Almshouse varied during the century. In 1621 the merchants claimed to be supporting eight seamen,⁴ but in 1650 there were nineteen places in the Almshouse of which six were occupied by women.⁵ Some of the occupants received small pensions, and a number of free suits or uniforms were also provided. During at least part of the period, a compulsory contribution towards the upkeep of the almshouse was levied on seamen's wages at the rate of a penny in the pound. A few individuals made some useful gifts, but the almshouse was not heavily endowed. At the end of the century Edward Colston undertook to maintain six poor seamen if the Society would provide places for them, and the executors of Richard Jones agreed to maintain six more. A subscription was raised by the Society, and the Merchants' Almshouse was rebuilt and enlarged.

Latimer states that there is scarcely an allusion to the almshouse in the Society's records from the reign of Elizabeth till 1695,⁶ but in fact it is mentioned frequently in the *Treasurer's Books* and elsewhere, and a number of extracts, including the Rules drawn up in 1650, are printed below.

¹ F. B. Bickley, *The Little Red Book of Bristol*, ii, 186.

² See p. 66.

³ See p. 66, note 2.

⁴ See p. 10.

⁵ T. J. Manchee, *The Bristol Charities*, Bristol, 1831, i, 251.

⁶ J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, p. 176.

Apart from the Almshouse, the Society undertook a number of miscellaneous charitable works. It gave pensions and gifts to decayed merchants and seamen; it helped redeem sailors from captivity among the Turks; it assisted the widows and dependants of mariners; and it acted as a benevolent society particularly for those connected with the sea. Some of these activities are illustrated by the following extracts.

(b) *Educational Work*

The main service of the Society to education in the seventeenth century was the limited but useful one of paying a schoolmaster to teach poor mariners' children. Latimer states that the first mention of a school for poor children is in 1621,¹ but this is an error, for in a petition to the Privy Council in 1595, the merchants refer to their work in maintaining 'a free Schoole for marriners children',² and the earliest surviving account—that of 1610/11—records the payment of £2 a year to a schoolmaster.³ There are not a great many references to the school in this period, but a note of the appointment of a new schoolmaster appears from time to time in the Society's books, and some details are available concerning repairs to the school.

In the early accounts, there are references to payments to a man who instructed poor sailors in the art of navigation,⁴ so that the Society could claim to be doing something on a modest scale for technical as well as for primary education.

The Society was not a great patron of learning or of higher education, but a few extracts show that it did not entirely ignore them. In addition it regularly rewarded the preacher who delivered a sermon at St. Stephen's on the day of the annual General Court, and it also made payments to those who looked after the religious needs of the sailors at Shirehampton and the poor in the Merchants' Almshouse.⁵

(a) *Charitable Work*

168. THE ALMSHOUSE AND SCHOOL, 1595

the letter to the Mafor and Aldermen of Bristoll to assist the Company of Marchantes for the Collecting of the Dueties of Tonnage for the poore and poundage of Marriners Wages⁶

¹ J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, p. 82.

² See no. 168.

³ See p. 86, no. 164.

⁴ See p. 114, nos. 225, 226.

⁵ See nos. 205, 236.

⁶ The heading is in a different hand from the copy of the letter.

After our hartie Commendacions whereas wee vnderstand that in times past there hath bine erected an Almehouse in that Citty of Bristoll for the reliefe of aged and ympotent saylers, and that for the maintenance thereof, there was by full Consent of the marchantes and saylers to bee levyed and Collected of euery tonnes lading of marchantes goodes of the same Citty Three half pence, and of every saylers wages one penny out of every pound with which sommes as well the said Hospitall or Almehouse hath bine hetherto mainteyned as alsoe a free Schoole for marriners Children and a yeerely stipend to bee paid to a minister to say service at a Chappell in Sheirhampton neere Hungroade soe as the marriners bound to attend their shippes mighte bee edified and themselves Neverthelesse not drawne from their Charge to the indangering of their shippes and goodes And that wee vnderstand that this Laudable and godly order is somewhat oppugned and withstoode by Reprisers¹ and such as goe on fisheing voyadges to the Newfoundland to the great discouragment of other well mynded men, and to the noe small ympoverishing of the Hospitall, wee have therefore thoughte good (knoweing that by reason of the greate nombers of marriners that have of late byn maymed in her Maiesties services, and on those Reprisall voyadges which may have reliefe there that oughte much more nowe to be mainteyned then of former times) to will and require you in her Maiesties name to Assist the Collecto^{rs} of the said Hospitall to gather and levy the saide three halfe pence on the tonne of marchantes goodes, and a penny on the pound of marriners wages, as well on the saide Reprisers and New Land men as on other marchantes, And soe we bid you hartilie farwell from the Courte of Nonsuch the vth of October 1595.

Your Loving Frindes

John Cant'

Wm : Burley

C Howard John Hunsdon

T heneage

Ro. Ceicill

Book of Trade, 39²

¹ Those engaged in reprisals in the war against Spain.

² This document is calendared in *Cal. S.P.D. Elizabeth, 1595-1598*, pp. 105, 106. It is in fact the earliest document in the *Book of Trade*, although it appears second in order, and after one dated 1598.

169. THE MERCHANTS' ALMSHOUSE AND CHARITABLE GIFTS. 17 NOVEMBER 1618

Memorandum that at a generall Courte houlden the seavententh day of November anno 1618 ytt is ordeyned and established that noe person shalbee admitted nor take anie benefitt of the allowance to the poore people of the Almeshouse of this Company¹ vnlesse the same bee allowed and approved by the Maister Wardeins and assistantes, onely the Maister for the tyme beinge in tyme of Vacancie of any Roomth in the same Almeshouse may admitt anie one to take the benefitt thereof vntill the next Courte.

The names of such persons as are nowe appointed to have the allowance out of the marchantes Almeshouse

John Evered, weekly	j ^s iiij ^d
John Warden weekly	j ^s
John Hiscockes weekly	j ^s
John Browne weekly	j ^s
Thomas Sparkes	j ^s
Hughe Tyler	j ^s
John Scampe	j ^s
Goodwife Lyar	vj ^d
Goodwife Sheppard	vj ^d
M ^{rs} Robertes yeerly	ij ^{li}
Widowe Freeman yeerely	ij ^{li}
the Curate of Shirehampton	ij ^{li} 12
the keeper of the Slipp at Hungroad ³	ij ^{li}
the scholemaister for teachinge poore marriners	
Children yeerly	ij ^{li}
Francis Jones for teachinge the arte of Navigation quarterly	xx ^s

Memorandum that at a generall Courte holden the vjth November⁴ 1620 John Hughes marriner is appointed to have the nexte roome in the Almehouse.

memorandum that at a generall Courte holden the viijth April 1622. Thomas Stumpe boateman is⁵ appointed to have the next Roome in the Almeshouse.

Book of Charters I, 82

¹ *Compa'* in the manuscript.

² See p. 116, no. 236.

³ See p. 136.

⁴ *Novemb* in the manuscript with a line over it denoting contraction.

⁵ Followed by *ad* struck through.

170. GIFTS TO THE ALMSHOUSE¹

Mr Richard Long² of the Citty of Bristoll merchant and one of the Aldermen of the same Citty by a Codicell annexed to his last will and Testament did give devise and bequeath unto the Maio^r and Cominalty³ of Bristoll and to the Master, Wardens and assistantes of the Company of Marchantes, One Annuity of Tenne poundes per annum, To be issueing out of Tibbottes Farme in Siston in Gloucestershire, To be employed at thend of euery Three halfe years in Tenne Coates, Ten Caps, ten paire of stockinges and ten paire of shooes to be deliuered vnto and worne by the poore men of the Marchantes Almeshouse for ever.

Mr Hugh Browne⁴ sometyne Major and Alderman of this Citty, Did give 5¹¹ 4^s per annum for ever towards the releife of the poore Almesmen in the Marchantes Almeshouse as his guift for ever, For the establishment whereof hee hath procured the engagement of the Major and Aldermen of Bristoll vnder the Citty Seale.

The Master, Wardens and Cominalty of Marchantes Adventurers by an order in their Common Haule Dated the xjth Day of November 1650, Did order that from thenceforth for ever, there shalbe Two Coates, Caps, stockins and shooes provided for Two Almesmen to be added to the number Ten given by Alderman Long, to be issueing out of the Haule stocke. And to be deliuered in the like manner as Alderman Longes are appoynted.

Mr Robert Cann Merchant sometyne Master of this Society did voluntarily give towards the releife of a poore man in the Almeshowse ij^s per weeke for ever, which promised to confirme by Deed on some land. He never setled it and executrix refused to pay it.⁵

Book of Charters II, 5

¹ The following extracts are taken from a number included in 'A Record of Benefactors to the Marchantes of Bristoll', *Book of Charters II*, 3-5.

² For a biographical note, see H. E. Nott, *The Deposition Books of Bristol* (Bristol Record Society's Publications, vi), i, 252. For his will, see Bristol Record Office, *Great Orphan Books*, ii, 128-140.

³ *Coialty* in the manuscript with a line denoting contraction.

⁴ For a biographical note, see H. E. Nott, *The Deposition Books of Bristol*, i, 245. There is a copy of his will in the Bristol Record Office, *Great Orphan Books* ii, 150-158.

⁵ The last sentence is a later entry, and the record of the donation is struck through.

171. 1622-23

Inprimis for xx^s which was paid to goodwife Trippett by the Consent of the Master¹ and Company towards the Relief of herselfe and Children in their sicknes, her husband being in Captivitie in Algier

0001¹¹ 00^s 00^d

Treasurer's Books I, 9

172. 1625-26

Inprimis for v¹¹ paide by order of the Company vnto Mr Thomas Hopkins of benevolence, for one yeere endinge at Michaelmas 1626 and hee is to haue² the like fower yeeres if hee lyve soe longe

005¹¹ 00^s 00^d

Treasurer's Books I, 12

173. 10 November 1640

Alsoe at this generall Courte it is graunted and agreed that Elizabeth Davis widowe the late wife of John Davis marriner deceased for and towards the Relief and mayntenance of her selfe and sixe small children shall haue and bee allowed weekly twoe shillings and six pence to bee paid vnto her soe long as necessitie shall require and this Companie shall thinke meete,⁴ the first payment to bee made vnto her on Satturday next following being the fourtenth of this instant moneth and from thence forward to contynue weekly.

Allowance to
the widow of
John Davis,
mariner.³

Hall Book I, 34

174. 10 November 1644

Memorandum That at this Courte, the Master, Assistantes and Company did (with their generall assent and consent) give and grannte vnto Edward Wickham a poore aged Seaman, an Almesmans roome now voide in the Marchantes Almshouse in the Marsh; To holde and enioye the same with all stipendes and profittes incident therevnto, for the terme of his naturall life.

almshouse in
the Marsh⁵

Hall Book I, 67

¹ Mr in the manuscript.

² followed by *it for* struck through.

³ Marginal note in a different hand.

⁴ and this Companie shall thinke meete above the line.

⁵ The marginal notes in this extract and in extracts nos. 175-180 are in a different hand from the actual entries.

175. 7 December 1644

The payments
to Pensioners
to be suspended

Itt is alsoe ordered, That Richard Ash from henceforth pay noe Pencion or pencions whatsoever to any Pencioners formerlie allowed by this society, vntill God shall enable the Company better to pay the same. (Save only to the Almesmen resident in the Almshouse.)

Hall Book I, 70

176. 27 February 1647

Almshouse

Alsoe at this Courte, George Boage, Lewis Jones and Phillip Fowler being aged Seamen havinge petitioned for seuerall Romthes in the Almshouse. It was grannted, That they shall haue the vse of three seuerall romthes in the said Almshouse, Duringe the will and pleasure of the Master and Company aforesaid and noe longer.

Hall Book I, 95

177. 19 January 1648

Robert
Henshaw a
decayed
Merchant

Alsoe vpon the Peticion of Robert Henshaw a poore decayed merchant who hath bin a long tyme in captivity with the Turkes. It is ordered that hee shalbe allowed for the presente Three poundes Which Mr Ash is ordered to pay him.

Charles Gerrard
a poor Mariner

Alsoe vpon the Peticion of Charles Gerrard a poore Marriner It is ordered that hee shalbe allowed Forty shillinges to buy parte of a boate, To be payed to the partie which hee shall buy parte of a boate off.

Hall Book I, 112

178. 10 November 1648

p. 130
Robert
Henshaw a
decayed mem-
ber to be
allowed 2/-
per week

And whereas Robert Henshaw a decayed merchant hath petitioned this Society for some releife, It is at this Courte ordered, voted and agreed, That the said Robert Henshaw shalbe allowed Two shillinges per weeke as a Pencion duringe the pleasure of the Society aforesaid.

p. 131
Mr Leigh a
distressed
Minister from
Ireland

. . . And alsoe the Master and Company did give vnto one Mr Leigh, a poore distressed Minister who came out of Ireland¹ the summe of Three powndes and did order Mr Ash to pay the same.

Hall Book I, 130, 131

179. 21 September 1650

Sept 21 By money paid to Thomas Wickham towards the Building of the Almshouses in the march

21 10 00

Treasurer's Book II, 4

¹ Probably a refugee in the disturbances following the Irish Rebellion of 1641 and the repercussions of the English Civil War.

180. 11 November 1650

Ordinances made for the Merchantes Almeshouse, To be ^{p. 174} observed by the Poore Marriners and poore Marriners widowes ^{Ordinances for the Merchants almeshouse} that are or shalbe therein placed, agreed on by the whole society of Marchantes at the Generall meeting the 11th day of November Anno Domini 1650

1. First that they be carefull to pray privately every morning and evening in their Chamebers, that they frequent constantly every Sabbath day morning and evening their parrish Church or some other Church where they may heare Sermons and be Instructed in the Knowledge of God, and exercise of Religion, and to heare Lecture Sermons on the weeke dayes. And that for every omission that shalbe proved against them, Six pence of that weekes pay shalbe kept back at their next pay day. Provided that they be not hindred by sicknesse, or some vrgent necessity, of Which the Master and Wardens of the Company of Merchantes are only to be Judges.

2. That if any amongst them be found at any tyme to be druncke, hee or shee shall forfeit their whole weekes pay for the first offence And for the second offence a moneths pay, And for the third, Expulsion If the Society thincke it not meete upon his Repentance and amendment to pardon it.

3. That if any be heard to Curse or sweare, for every such ^{p. 175} offence he shall forfeit his weekes pay, for the Second offence, Two weekes pay, for the third a moneths pay, and for the fourth Expulsed.

4. None shalbe suffered to entertayne any one or more whatsoever into their Chamebers to lodge there, more then three nightes in a whole yeare, except in case of sicknesse for their necessary helpe during that tyme, and to part againe vpon recovery vpon payne of haveing their whole pay to be restrayned for that time (being Pentioners) or to be expulsed (if they haue only Chambers Gratis)

5. They shall take their seuerall turnes weekly and begin each Munday morninge to make cleane the Common place of the Almeshouse, as the Entry, Kitchen, Gallery, and soe keepe it cleane all that weeke on forfeiture of Six pence for every weekes neglect, and if sicknesse disenable, then to hire one.

6. There shalbe every First Day of the moneth, a Porter chosen amongst the men to keepe the Key of the Gate, the most

ancient amongst them begining first, and soe successively to the youngest untill all haue gone through their seuerall turnes, who shall constantly make it fast at Eight of the Clocke from the Nine and twentieth of September to the Five and twentieth of March, and open it at seaven in the morninge, And from the Five and twentieth of March to the Nine and twentieth of September make it fast at Nine of the Clocke and open it at six, And if any through sicknesse or weaknesse be not able to attend the duty, hee shall allowe six pence a moneth to some other who shall be his Deputy, And if that Porter or his Deputy faile in his duty, he shall forfeit foure pence for each tyme to be divided amongst the rest of the men.

7. That whereas by the Guift of Alderman Long there are Ten Coats etc given euery yeare and halfe to Tenne poore men of the said Almshouse, Those Coates etc shalbe given Constantly to those men that shalbe successively chosen in the places of those that haue them at present untill God shall please to raise up some Benefactor to give the like to the rest, and when any of them dyes or is expulsed, hee shall leave his Coate etc to his Successor and they that haue them shall constantly weare them abroad, and whoever shalbe found at Church etc without them shall forfeit for every such omission six pence to be divided amongst the rest.

8. That there be noe Contentions amongst them, It is ordayned that if any difference doe at any time arise, they shall make it knowne to the Clarke of the Merchantes hall on the next pay day, *p. 176* who shall heare and determine it, And if hee cannot compose it, that then the Master of the Company be made acquaynted with it, who shall end it, And if any one prove soe troublesome as to revenge himselfe by approbrious and revileing speeches, hee shall forfeite twelue pence of his pay, halfe to the partie wronged, and thother halfe to be put into the Poores box.

9. It is ordered that every pay day both men and women being called into one Romthe by the Clarke of the Hall, hee shall audibly read these orders in the hearinge of them all vpon payne of forfeiting Twelue pence for euery omission to be put into the Poores Box.

Hall Book I, 174-176

181. 20 December 1652

Alsoe at this Courte, It is ordered, That Mr^{rs} Dickenson widdowe late the wife of Phillip Dickenson merchant shall have the weekly

pencion of Two shillings for one yeare from the Tenth of November last or During the pleasure of the Hall (if shee petition for it).

Hall Book I, 228

182. 9 August 1653

Alsoe Charity Evans widdowe is graunted a Romth in the Almeshowse without a pencion; And Hugh Tucker is graunted an Almesmans romth and pencion.

It is alsoe ordered, That the widdowe Martin shall have Tenne shillings payed her out of the Hall towards her releife.

It is alsoe ordered, That Roberte Read shall haue the loane of Five powndes for six moneths on his owne Bond.

Hall Book I, 240

183. 14 October 1654

Alsoe at this Court Mr John Knight thelder and Mr John Knight the younger are desired and appoynted to write to Edmond Wall merchant now resident in Nevis to lade home for Bristoll a parcell of sugar there remayning due for a debte of Thirty powndes owing by Mr Thomas Wall deceased to the Company towards the releife of the poore in the Almeshowse.

Hall Book I, 251

184. 10 November 1655

Alsoe it is ordered, That the 100^{li} given by Mr Hugh Browne Alderman deceased for the vse of the poore in the Almeshowse shalbe put into the Chamber of Bristoll who are by consent to allowe Five powndes and four shillings yearly for the interest thereof, And to give the Seale of the Citty to secure the payment thereof.

Hugh Brown's
Gift to be placed
in the Chamber
5.4.0 per cent.

Hall Book I, 267

185. 10 November 1656

Alsoe it is voted that John Pearse a poore seaman shalbe allowed 3^{li} towards the buying of him a boate.

Hall Book I, 271

186. 10 November 1657

Upon the petition of Susanna Davis a poore woman shee is voted to haue 20^s allowed her to carry her and 8. children to London from hence.

Hall Book I, 279

187. 1660

July 27th For monys giuen by order of Mr. John Bowine Master to two Portingall merchantes that ware in destres 001 00 00

September 3d For monys paid Mr Richard Ash to pay the Poore 050 00 00

Treasurer's Book II, 12

188. 19 September 1666

Alsoe vpon the petition of the wife of John Hawkins a poore Seaman now in slavery with the Turkes the Company did vote him Five powndes towards his Redempcion out of his slavery to be payed for that vse by the Treasurer.

Hall Book I, 395

189. 10 November 1666

Alsoe upon the petition of Amy Madox wife of John Madox a slaue in Turkey, It is voted there shalbe 5¹¹ allowed towards his Redempcion which is to remayne in the Treasurers hand to be employed for that use only, shee bringinge a certificate that shee hath money enough with that 5¹¹ to effect the said ransome. And that the said 5¹¹ be employed according to that use and noe other.

Hall Book I, 400

190. 10 May 1667

Alsoe at this Haule upon the petition of Anne Duncan the wife of James Duncan Marriner now prisoner in Middleborough,¹ she is voted to haue Forty shillings of the guifte of the Haule towards the releife of her and her children.

*Hall Book I, 408**

191. 1671-72

paid George Moodey at severall times by order of the master to pay the pore Almespeople etc 140¹¹ 00^s 00^d

Treasurer's Book II, 28

192. 11 November 1672

Voted that vpon the petition of Thomas Williams and his nine companions late captives in Argiers they be supplied with Five poundes as a guift of this Hall for and towards the defraying of

¹ Middelburg. A number of Bristol sailors were taken prisoner in the Second Dutch War.

the charges of their journeys from hence to London and Mr Treasurer is desired and ordered to disburse it accordingly.

Hall Book II, 34

193. 1672-73

To George Moodey at seuerall times by order of the
Master to pay the poore people of the Almshouse etc 80¹¹ 00^s 00^d
... paid giuen 20 seamen Hamburgers that had
their ship cast away 2 00 00

Treasurer's Book II, 29

194. 25 August 1673

Also then voted, that the summe of six poundes be issued out by Mr Treasurer to Henry Cott mariner on his peticon now preferred towards Recouery of his eyesight lately lost in an engagement at sea in the shipp Margaret of this Citty with a privateer of Holland.¹

Hall Book II, 48

195. 7 October 1673

Voted That tenn poundes be paid to Mrs Hoskins towards the redemption of her husband out of his Captivity in Fez soe as security be given to the *master* and wardens by bond to returne it againe to the hall if hee dies unredeemed or his redempcion cannot be obtained in twelve moneths now coming, and she is to procure some freind to give security accordingly and then Mr Treasurer to issue out the moneys.

... Ordered That Mr Treasurer doe exhibite to Elizabeth Andrewes for her present releife in the absence of her husband lately taken by the Dutch and supposed to be dead the summe of twenty shillings.

Hall Book II, 52

196. 5 October 1674

Then also voted and ordered That Mr Treasurer shall pay and issue forth to Henry Browne for and towards his discharge out of the Kings Bench prison (according to his petition now exhibited) Five poundes, and Mr William Jackson is to receave it for the petitioners use. And to George Garland towards freeing him out of Newgate (according to his petition now exhibited on that behalfe) the² summe of tenn poundes and that the moneys be paid into the hands of Captaine William Willett on this account for the Petitioners use and benefitt.

Hall Book II, 74

¹ In the Third Dutch War.

² Followed by *like* struck through.

197. 15 October 1675

ordered that they chimneys of the Almeshouse be amended and made fitt to carry smoke and Mr Mors the beadle is to take care to have it done.

Hall Book II, 84

198. 10 July 1675

Received this 10th July 1675 five pounds and foure shillings, the guift of Alderman Browne and Alderman Joseph Jackson, To the Poore of the Merchants Almeshouse ending at midsummer last past I say received for the use of the Society of merchant Adventurers

5¹¹ 4^s

p their Receiver

W. Mors¹

Bristol Record Office : Receipt Book 1675-98, No. 04055(2)

199. 29 February 1676

Memorandum Att this Court or Hall it was voted and ordered That a pention of one shilling and six pence be allowed weekly² to Elizabeth Stephens spinster during the pleasure of this society. Forasmuch as shee was the daughter of William Stephens merchant deceased a late member of this society. and also neere to Richard Long Alderman deceased a late member and benefactor to this society. And the beadle is to issue it forth to her accordingly.

Hall Book II, 90

200. 10 November 1677

voted that Five pounds be paid by Mr Treasurer to Mr Penwarne Minister of St Stephens as a token of our respecte to him for readeing prayers this day and visiting the Almespeople.

Hall Book II, 119

201. 10 November 1678

Then alsoe voted and ordered that twenty poundes be distributed to and amongst the mothers and wives of the two and twenty captives in Algier who have now exhibited their joint peticons for their present releife att the discretion of the auditors^{rs} of the accounts or the major number of them, And Mr Treasurer to issue out the Moneys accordingly.

Hall Book II, 134

¹ Signature.

² *weekly* written twice and the first entry struck through.

202. 10 November 1683

Att the same hall it was voted that Tenn pounds a peece be bestowed towards the redempcion of John Johnson, William Bowry and John Tayler out of their respective slaveries, But the Monyes to lye in the Treasurers hands till they are respectively redeemed.

Hall Book II, 221

203. 10 November 1685

Alsoe whereas sixty and odd petitioners doe now petition to vs for releife It is voted and ordered that the Audito^{rs} of accomptes or the Major number of them meete in our Common hall toomorrow att eleaven of the Clock in the forenoone and if they see cause to adjourne from time to time till twenty poundes be distributed according to their discrecions to and amongst such of the petitioners as they shall thinke fitt . . .

Voted that noe petitions be presented to this hall for Charity and releife except it be for persons relateing to the sea.

Hall Book II, 278

204. 3 June 1686

Alsoe voted and ordered that the master wardens and Treasurer or any 3 of them doe veiw the roofe of our Almeshouse and doe either repaire it or new strike it as they shall see most convenient, and likewise the pitching of the key and back.¹

Hall Book II, 301

205. 10 November 1686

Alsoe ordered that Five poundes be paid to Mr Nicholas Pemwarne by Mr Treasurer as a token of our respects to him for this dayes Sermon att St Stephens and for visiting our Almesfolkes and burying those that dye, And to the clerke of the said parish Six shillinges and eight pence and to the Sexton three shillinges and foure pence for their this days attendances.

Hall Book II, 315

206. 1689

June 1 paid Mathew Beales note tiler for white-liming plaistering and mending all the roomes in the Almeshouse

002 : 03 : 05

p. 15

¹ The Society was responsible for repairing the Back and Quay of Bristol which were the chief places for landing goods.

	.. June 22 charges on the buriall of Thomas Blygh one of the Almsmen being drowned in Hungroad	000 : 13 : 00
p. 16	... July 12 Charges on the buriall of William Pilman one of the Almsmen and gave him in his sickness by order	000 : 18 : 00

Beadle's Book I, 15, 16

207. 10 November 1690

The master reported that hee had received 50¹¹ a legacy given to our Hall by Mrs Margaret Abbey the profitt whereof is to be bestowed for the releife of poor Mariners in our Almeshouse.

Ordered that her name be putt upp in the table of benefactors of this Hall.

Hall Book II, 460

208. 10 November 1690

Whereas one hundred and odd petitioners have now¹ petitioned for releife It is voted and ordered that the Audito^{rs} of accomptes or the maior number of them meet in our Common hall the 11th instant by ten of the Clock in the morning and if they see cause to adjourne from tyme to tyme till thirty poundes be distributed according to their discrecion to and amongst such of the peticoners as they shall thinke fitt And that Mr Treasurer doe issue it forth accordingly.

Hall Book II, 462

209. 1 October 1691

the master reported that Leonard Harding is redeemed from his slavery in Argeir wherefore its ordered that the ten poundes given by this Hall the 10th November 1687 towards his said redemption be issued forth to Mr John Cann for the use of the said late captive.

Hall Book II, 476

210. 2 October 1693

Committee to
thanke Mr
Colston etc

voted that the master wardens and assistants² and such as they shall thinke fitt to call to him doe waite on Mr Edward

¹ Followed by a deletion.

² wardens and assistants above the line.

Colston to thanke him for his generous offer to this society ; of being Governo^rs of his new erected Hospitall, and that they will accept of it.¹

Hall Book II, 538

211. 10 October 1693

That upon the petition of Martha Cann Spinster on behalf of ^{12^l per annum} her two younger brothers Thomas Cann and Robert Cann Sons of ^{to Thomas and Robert Cann} Mr John Cann deceased a late member of this Society twelve pounds per annum be exhibited towards their education and support during the pleasure of this Hall to be disposed of by the Master Wardens and Mr Treasurer and Mr John Yeamans Junior or the Major number of them.

Hall Book II, 542.

212. 24 October 1695

Memorandum That at this Court or Hall The master reporting Mr Colstons that Mr Edward Colston hath proposed to mainteyne six poore ^{proposalls for} sailers in our Almeshouse In case wee will build convenient roomthes to receive them. It is voted that this proposall be thankfully accepted And the master is desired to write him a letter of thanks.² ^{Almesfolke}

Also Mr Arthur Hart proposing on behalfe of the Executo^rs of Richard Jones Esquire deceased that out of the benefitt of one ^{Executors of} thousand poundes this Hall shall mainteyne either six poore ^{Mr Jones the} sailers or sailers widowes in our said Almeshouse and building like roomths to receive them And that on payment of any part of the said 1000^l a seale be given them to pay four poundes per Centum interest till a settlement of this Charity be made And the master to returne thanks for the same And the master, wardens, Sir William Hayman, Mr Arthur Hart, Mr Edward Jones, Mr Edward Tocknell, Mr John Cook, Mr Charles Pope are appointed a Committee to treat with workemen for the building ^{Committee to} aforesaid And any member that pleaseth may assist. ^{treate with} ^{workemen for} ^{adding new} ^{buildings to our} ^{Almeshouse}

Hall Book III, 45

¹ This refers to St. Michael's Hill Almshouse for twelve men and twelve women erected by Edward Colston at the cost of £2,500. In January 1696 Colston conveyed it to Sir Richard Hart and twenty-seven others, mainly Merchant Venturers, with powers to manage it and to appoint their successors. For further references, see *Hall Book III*, 41, 43, 56, 75-80.

² For the correspondence, see *Hall Book III*, 47, 56.

213. 10 November 1695

10th French
ministers

Voted that Mr Treasurer exhibite to the French ministers¹ now petitioning for releife tenn pounds the moneys to be paid to Mr Henry Gibbes and Mr John Yeamans Junior for their vse.

Hall Book III, 49

214. 14 January 1696

Beadle to pay
no charges
p^r burying
Almesfolke

Voted That for the future our Beadle shall not be att any charge for the burying of any person that dyes in our Almeshouse, but the freinds of the deceased or the Parish from whence such dead person came shall defray the same.

Hall Book III, 58

215. 1697

3 Feb. For Thomas Jacksons Attendance 6 weekes at pulling downe the Citty wall and diging the Foundation for the almeshouse 8d per day before agreed for its Buildinge

01 04 00

Beadle's Book II, 9

216. 12 October 1697

Gayner St
Peters Randall
St. Nicholas
Saunders St
James Welsh
St Nicholas
Cassell St
Stephens and
Whelly St
Thomas
admitted in
new Almeshouse

voted that John Gayner of St Peters parish, Thomas Randall of St Nicholas, Thomas Saunders of St James, Robert Welsh of St Nicholas, John Cassell of St Stephens and Phillipp Whelly a person late come from Virginia but borne in St Thomas Parish be on their seuerall petitions admitted into the six new roomes lately built by this Hall² endowed by Edward Colston Esq (a member of this hall) they giving security to St Stephens parish as usuall.³

Hall Book III, 98

217. 17 January 1699

order to pay 5th
p^r use of
William
Challoner lately
redeemed from
slavery

Ordered that the Five pounds given towards the redempcion of William Challoner out of his late slavery in Sally (he being now redeemed and in London) be issued forth to Sir William Hayman for the vse of the said late Captive by our Treasurer.

Hall Book III, 138

¹ Huguenot refugees, a number of whom had settled in Bristol.

² by this Hall above the line.

³ St. Stephen's Parish, in which the Almshouse stood, did not wish the almsmen to secure a settlement, as the parish would then become responsible for them under the Poor Law. Hence the almsmen were required to give security that they would not become chargeable to the parish.

218. 7 March 1699

The Master reporting from the Committee that they had contracted with George Winter for his interest in the old housing late the widow Puckledens for 100¹¹ It is voted that vpon Winters assignement of his said interest to the Master and Wardens for the use of the society (which our Clerke is ordered to make forthwith) Mr Treasurer pay him the said 100¹¹ And vpon that the same housing to be immediately pulled downe and then the old almshouse to be pulled downe and rebuilt.

Bargaine with
Mr Wynter
confirmed

Old almshouse
to be pulled
downe and
rebuilt

Hall Book III, 143

219. 7 March 1699

The Master proposeing a subscription for the pulling downe and rebuilding our old almshouse. Hee and the members present readily subscribed and it is ordered that the same be presented to the rest of our members for their subscripcion in the like manner.

a voluntary
subscription
for rebuilding
the old
Almshouse

Hall Book III, 144

220.

1699 John Batchelor
Linen Draper

{ William Whitehead Distiller
James Hollidge Merchant¹

In the year 1696 the Merchants of this City built the Left Wing of their Almshouse in King street, and this Year Rebuilt the Old One, and united both Angles together.²

Bristol Record Office : MS. Calendar no. 07831

(b) *Educational Work*

221. 1610-11

more paide goodman Greene for teaching poore
marriners Children his fee

001 06 08

Book of Trade : General Account 1610-11

222. 1612-13

more paide to Thomas Greene for teaching poore
marriners children

002 00 00

Book of Trade : General Account 1612-13

223. 1615-16

more paid for Reparacions done at the hall, schoole,
and Almshouse this yeere as by the particulers
appeareth the same

000 15 08

Book of Trade : General Account 1615-16

¹ The names of the mayor and sheriffs.

² The Beadle's Account for 1696 shows expenditure of £215 18s. 8d. on purchasing land for the new Almshouse and erecting the building.

224. 1617-18

more j¹¹ v^s payd Roger Justice the maior sargant,
and is for a quarters dutye, allowed by this Company
towards a lecturer¹ for two yeares only in October, 1618 001 05 00

Treasurer's Book I, 4

225. 1618-19

more is due to have iiij¹¹, paide to Francis Jones
for one yeeres fee allowed him for instructing poore
sailers in the Arte of Navigacion 004 00 00

Book of Trade : Treasurer's Account 1618-19

226. 1619-20

more, v¹¹ paide to Mr Tucker lecturer for his
stipend this yeare 005 00 00
... more iij¹¹ paide to Francis Jones for teaching
Navigacion $\frac{3}{4}$ of a yeare 003 00 00

Treasurer's Book I, 6

227. 1619-20

more ij¹¹ paide to Thomas Greene scholemaster for
teaching the children 002 00 00

Book of Trade : Edmond Browne's Account 1619-20

228. 10 November 1653

Alsoe vpon the petition of John Massy, It is voted that hee
shall have and enioye the schoole belonging to the Hall and the
stipend incident therevnto for soe long time as hee shall well
demeane himselfe therein.

Hall Book I, 244

229. 10 November 1655

Minister of
Shirehampton²

Alsoe it is voted, That Three poundes yearly shalbe added to
the stipend of the Minister of Sherehampton during the pleasure
of the Hall.

Hall Book I, 268

¹ To deliver lecture sermons.

² In a different hand from the entry.

230. 1658-59

The Cost of Flouring the Schoole and Littell chamber

	li	s	d	
For 116 deales to Mr Holway	05	: 16	: 00	} 11. 12. 04
For Thomas Wickham worke as per note	02	: 18	: 06	
For Stephen Perrys note	01	: 15	: 07	
For John Falkners masons note	00	: 08	: 09	
For storinge the boords to Burkett, backer	00	: 05	: 00	
For hallinge the boords to the backers and backe		04	: 00	
For laborers to Carry out rubble, etc	00	: 04	: 06	
	<hr/>			
	11	: 12	: 04	

Treasurer's Book II, 11

231. 11 November 1667

Alsoe at this Courte, it is voted and ordered, That Mr Samuel Sturmy shall haue Tenne powndes as a gratuity from the Company for a Booke of the Arte of Navigacion by him dedicated to the Haule, To be payed to him by the Treasurer.¹

Hall Book I, 417

232. 1667-68

To money paid for makeing a new window in the
schole howse

00 19 02

Treasurer's Book II, 24

233. 10 November 1669

Alsoe ordered that Elizabeth Birtes sonne being a student in Oxford shalbe allowed Forty shillinges towards his present mainteynance there.²

Hall Book I, 451

¹ The book is presumably *The Mariners Magazine* by Captain Samuel Sturmy, first published in 1667, with a dedication to Charles II, and an address to the Society of Merchant Adventurers of Bristol, dated Bristol, 10 November, 1667. There is a copy of it in the Merchants' Records, 1684 edition, with torn frontispiece on which is the name William Daling. On the dedication to Charles II is written 'James Holyer Invercargill 25 Aug. 1868.' Sturmy was voted another £10 by the Hall on 15 July, 1669 (*Hall Book I*, 448).

² For another such grant, see p. 89, no. 165.

234. 10 November 1673

ordered That the thankes of this society be returned to Mr James Millerd for his groundplatt of this Citty this day presented to vs, and that Mr Treasurer provide a peece of plate (with the Armes of this society therein engraven) to the value of Five poundes and present the said Mr Millerd therewith as a token of our retaliation of respect to him.¹

Hall Book II, 56

235. 5 October 1674

Then voted that tenn poundes be presented by the Treasurer unto Mr Richard Blome for his civility and respects in presenting us with two volumes of his workes (vizt) A volume of Geography and Traffique, And a volume of Britannia beautified with sculptures and dedicated to our society with our Coate of Armes in the Front of each volume.²

Hall Book II, 74

236. 18 October 1678

Voted that on Mr John Goldenham minister of Westbury on his petition³ setting forth that he hath for a yeere past and more officiated at the Chappell of Sherehampton neere Hungroad by reading divine service and preaching to the mariners and others there and on view of the certificate from the parishioners of the truth of the petition It is ordered that Mr Treasurer doe exhibite to the said Mr Goldenham Forty shillings presently, and doe yeerely continue to him a stipend of Forty shillings per annum to commence from 29th September last, This to be soe exhibited during the pleasure of the Hall.

Hall Book II, 131

237. 24 June 1682

Also that John Bateman be (according to his petition now exhibited) admitted master of the schoole (belonging to this Hall) during our pleasure and that the stipend formerly paid to preceding masters be exhibited to him by Mr Treasurer.

Hall Book II, 198

¹ For Millerd's work, see *Trans. B.G.A.S.*, xliv, 203-219. The plan is preserved in the Merchants' Records.

² The volumes were: *A Geographical Description of the four parts of the World. . . . Also a Treatise of Travel and another of Traffick. The whole illustrated with mapps and figures.* London, 1670; and *Britannia; or a Geographical Description of the Kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland*, etc., London, 1673. *The Dictionary of National Biography* comments that Blome was a publisher and compiler of some celebrity who, by the aid of subscriptions adroitly levied, issued many splendid works. The volumes have not been preserved in the Merchants' Records.

³ on his petition above the line.

38. 10 October 1689

Voted that a weekly pention of one shilling be exhibited to Lettice Bateman widow during the pleasure of the Hall And this p. 415
to begin from friday next. Shee appeared in Hall and gave them
thankes and promised to leave (as Fixed to the house) the benches
and other thinges putt upp by her late husband and sonn in the
house and schoole. And also shee presented the Hall with the
draught of the shipp Monck and a draught of the tree of philo-
sophy.¹

Hall Book II, 414, 415

39. 10 November 1690

ordered that John Lewis be on his petition now exhibited
admitted into our schoole house in the roome of John Lewis his
late father deceased And that from henceforth hee receive the
salary and profitts of and for the same schoole.

Hall Book II, 461

40. 4 April 1695

Voted that Christopher Wall be admitted master of our schoole admission of
in the place of John Lewis late master there, hee procuring security Mr Wall into
to save St Stephens parish harmelesse against him and his family.² the schole

Hall Book III, 32

41. 26 April 1695

Memorandum that at this Court or Hall the Clerke acquainted
the Hall that Christopher Wall had not given security to save
St Stephens Parish (as voted) soe he appearing in Hall craved a
longer day to doe it and 'twas granted.

Hall Book III, 35

42. 19 July 1695

Then also Christopher Wall appeared, and desired that the Christopher
churchwardens of St Thomas their covenant may be sufficient for Wall about
endempnifying of St Stephens parish against him and his family the schole
and 'twas granted soe as it be donn too morrow or in some short
tyme after.

Hall Book III, 38

¹ Neither of these has survived.

² For the purpose of the Poor Law. Otherwise he might acquire a settle-
ment in St. Stephen's parish and the parish would be liable for him under
the Settlement Laws.

VIII. CORPORATE ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIETY

This section contains a number of documents intended to illustrate certain corporate activities of the Society. It does not include all such activities, since a number of them can be more conveniently noted in other places.

The first group of extracts is concerned with the patent to export Welsh butter. The export of butter was forbidden by various statutes, but licences were granted by the king under certain conditions, and in 1619 the Society obtained a share in a patent permitting export of a limited quantity. The butter patent involved the Society and its members in a good deal of trouble in the next forty years, and the full story must be sought elsewhere.¹ The Society of Merchant Venturers did not trade in a joint stock, but it made arrangements with the patentee and assisted in various ways those adventurers who were anxious to participate in the monopoly. The patent seems to have lapsed at the Restoration.

Another patent of similar nature in which the Society was interested was one to export calfskins in spite of the statutes prohibiting export. This patent too has a long history and created a good deal of unpleasantness both before and after the Civil War.² In both matters the merchants showed themselves keen champions of monopolies in which they had acquired a share, and there is more than a suspicion that they exported illegally quantities greatly in excess of what was permitted by the patents.³

A third corporate activity during part of the seventeenth century was the purchase in bulk, at a price fixed by the Society's committee, of goods brought to Bristol by strangers, that is, by people who were not burgesses. A committee bought the goods, and members who were interested signed an undertaking to accept

¹ J. Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, pp. 76, 136, 242-247; *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 143-146. There are a large number of documents concerning the business in the Society's Records. See *Book of Trade*, pp. 65-68, 77, 82-84, 87-88, 93-98, 117-119, 244, 246; *Book of Charters I*, 86; *Hall Book I*, 1, 3, 303. There are a number of references in the State Papers Domestic in the Public Record Office, and in the Bankes MSS. in the Bodleian Library. See also *Journals of the House of Commons*, I, 537, 549, 556, 593, 627, 661, 825, 831.

² J. Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, pp. 14, 15, 55, 242-244; *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 140-143; *Book of Trade*, pp. 87, 88, 170-175, 237-238; *Hall Book I*, 258, 267, 303, 342.

³ See pp. 239, 240, no. 466.

what was allotted to them at the appointed price. On one occasion, at least, the committee was authorized to sell in bulk for the benefit of the undertakers. Illustrations of these communal bargains are found in the earliest surviving *Hall Book*, which begins in 1639, and the practice was still going on after the Restoration. In the later sixteen-sixties, however, it seems to have ceased. At any rate, it was not recorded in the *Hall Book*.

The Society of Merchants, like its individual members, was not blind to the advantages of investing in property. It already owned a certain amount at the beginning of the century,¹ but it increased this in various ways during the period. Its most important investment was, of course, the purchase of the manor of Clifton, an operation which strained its financial resources at the time, but which was to prove in the long run more lucrative than was perhaps anticipated.

Three other projects which came to nothing were an offer from the king in 1621 to let to farm the customs of Bristol; an attempt to secure the wine licences for the Bristol area in 1672 and 1683; and an apparently still-born suggestion that the Hall should build lighters.

PATENT FOR THE EXPORT OF WELSH BUTTER

243. 17 November 1618

Alsoe this yeare² the Company obteyned Lycence to exporte Welshe butter out of certeyne Partes by reason of a Composicion had with the Pattentees.

Book of Charters I, 86

244. 1618-19

more is dew to haue 100¹¹ for soe much he paid the last Nouember 1619 to Mr Harbert³ for the license for to transport 800 kinterkins⁴ of butter yerly for xix yeeres of his fifth part of pattent

100 00 00

Treasurer's Book I, 5

¹ A volume beginning in the seventeenth century and containing abstracts of leases can be found in the Merchants' Records.

² I.e. the year November 1618—November 1619. The agreement was made in 1619.

³ William Herbert of Cogan Pill, Glamorganshire, had a share in a patent granted to Richard Williams and David Lewis by letters patent 20 February, 16 James I. See *Book of Trade*, pp. 93-94.

⁴ A cask of 112 lb.

245. 1619-20

more C¹¹ received¹ of Mr William Jones for soe much payde by Mr John Tomlinson out of the Companies money² to Mr Harbert towards the license for Butter³

100 00 00

Treasurer's Book I, 5r

246. Coppy of the remembrance giuen to Mr John Gardiner touching
p. 65 the prosecuting of certeyne affaires of the Company with Mr George Henley of London⁴ concerning the Exportacion of Butter by vertue of his Maiesties letters.⁵

Good frind Mr Gardiner

This may serve for your better remembrance that at your Coming vnto London, you repaire vnto Mr George Henley dwelling in S^t Lawrence Powltnes Certifeing him that wee have intreated you to Conclude with him in behalfe of the marchantes of this Citty Concerning the butter Lycence according to the Articles already agreed vpon and indented betwixt him and John Gonning and John Barker, which are exstant in the handes of Mr Nicholas Hide recorder of this Citty, whereto wee referre you, wishing you to resorte vnto the said Mr Hide and desyre him to drawe our Indenture with Mr Henley with caution and due consideracion according to the true intendment of our bargaine, which is that in consideracion of three hundred poundes fine in hand payde vnto the said George Henley as alsoe for one shilling per kilderkin⁶ to bee paid vnto the kinges Maiestie and twoe shillinges vnto the pattentees or their assignes at the shipping of our butter, wee and our assignes onely, excluding all others, shall have libertie and auctoritie to buy within the dominions of Wales the twoe third partes of Fower thowsand eighte hundred kinterkins of Welshe butter yeerely and to exporte the same any where beyond the seas from the Portes of Bristoll and Barnstable with the members thereof Cardiffe and Chepstowe or any other portes in South Wales. Alsoe wee have agreed to Joyne in Copartnership

¹ *Recd* in the manuscript, with a line indicating contraction.

² Probably the Society put up the money in the first place and later recovered it from those members who were concerned in the enterprise.

³ Followed by *hall stoc* struck through.

⁴ The licence had passed into his hands, and the merchants alleged that he debarred the Bristolians from exporting 'as if god has noe sonns to whome hee gave the benefitt of the earth but in London'.

⁵ The heading is in a different hand from the copy of the letter.

⁶ A cask of 112 lb.

with the said Mr Henley for the Joint buyeng of five thowsand sixe hundred kinterkins of butter yeerely, provided soe much may bee lawfully boughte and transported by vertue of the letteres patentés within South Wales, which hee is to sell ioyntly with vs, and to shipp them in our shippes, alloweing two shillinges for fraighte on euery kilderkin vnto Spayne and Portugall and one shillinge for fraighte of each kilderkin vnto France to bee paid in Bristoll vnto the husbands of our Company within fiftene Dayes after notice of the safe arryvall¹ thereof beyond the seas. Alsoe wee have agreed that Mr Henley shall allowe Forty poundes per annum towards the Charge of officers in seuerall portes to prevent the vnwarrantable exportacion of butter if the one halfe of the yeerely Charge shall amount vnto soe much, or the one halfe Provided it doth not excede lxxx¹¹ yeerely, and that for all seazures it shalbee Devided equally in halfe betweene him and vs, the kinges parte first deducted. The lessees in behalfe of this Citty are John Gonning, John Langton, John Tomlinson, Andrew Charlton, Richard Long, Francis Derricke and John Gardiner. The exceptions with Mr Henley touching exportacion of his full quantety of butter are peace with France and Spayne, Freedome of pestilence in England and Wales, buyeng at iij^d per pound and without any other iust ympediment. Thus Depending vppon your frindly Care in the premisses, presuming you will deale *p. 66* providently and advisedly therein and desiring to bee advised of your proceedinges as opportunitie of conveyance is offred, wee comitt you to god, resting

Your Loving frindes

John Gonning

Richard Longe

John Langton

Francis Derricke

John Tomlinson

Francis Creswicke

Andrew Charlton

Book of Trade, pp. 65, 66²

247. The names of certeyne persons that transported butter without licence and of other proceedings concerning the same³

John Powell and Company for Rochell in July 087 kilderkins

Ditto in August 1620 for Rochell

107 kilderkins

¹ Followed by *arr* struck through.

² The letter is not dated, but the agreement was made in 1619, and the letter appears to have been written in that year.

³ The heading is in a different hand.

Ditto in Septemb 1620 for Rochell or South Spaine	054 kilderkins
ditto in January 1620 per porte Cockett ¹ vnto Barnstable vnder Culler of landing and there their barke was ready to take it in	140 kilderkins
	<hr/> 388 kilderkins <hr/>

Mr Francklyn of Swanzey sent vnto Rochell 040 kilderkins
 Transported this yeere from Aberthaw vnto Minehead and Barnstably² by port Cockett and from thence transported into forraigne partes which is a way they have devised to deceave the king and the pattentees betweene 700 and 800 kilderkins

Wee have transported by warrant this yeere but eleven hundred Fiftie and twoe kilderkins out of Glamorgan sheire soe that the quantety which they have carried away Indirectly hath bine more than hath bine transported by vertue of the patent out of that Country.

All this Can bee Justified.

Concerning the prizes of butter in the markettes in Wales in the Townes next adioyning vnto the places wheare wee buy the butter wee doe transporte, wee have caused to bee furnished all this yeere

In Cardiffe at iij^d per pound
 In Newport at iij^d per pound
 In Carlion at iij^d per pound
 In the Citty of Bristoll at iij^d ob³ per pound.⁴

Book of Trade, p. 77⁵

¹ This would permit them to ship the butter out of Bristol under the pretence that it was going to an English port.

² *Sic.*

³ Halfpenny.

⁴ The Society claimed that the reason prices in the home markets had not risen was that it had supplied the markets 'with care and sufficiency' (*Book of Trade*, p. 83). As Latimer points out (*Merchant Venturers*, p. 144, note), the Society had not itself directly 'supplied the markets', but after the purchase of the patent, Common Council took great pains to supply them, even when it meant a loss to the Corporation. The suggestion is that the merchants dominated Common Council which took these steps in order that they might continue to enjoy the patent rights which (as in 1639) might be suspended by the Crown in time of high prices.

⁵ Not dated, but probably written in 1620.

248. The coppie of the bonds giuen by those that were ymployed in the buying and prouiding of butter to bee exported by the Company¹

Roger Williams of Newporte gent'

Henry Morgan of the Friars in the County of Monmoth esquire

George Langley of Carlion } yeomen
Roger Jones of the same }

Zalathieil Samuell of Cogan Pill yeoman

William Herbert of Cardiffe in the County of Glamorgan esquire bound to William Jones and Alexander James of Bristoll marchantes in j^m'²

With Condicion that if the aboue bounden Roger Williams his executors administrators and assignes and euery of them doe from time to tyme and at all times hereafter to his and their vttermost endeavo^{rs} well and truely ymploy and bestowe within the County of Monmoth All such some and somes of money which hee or their³ shall have or receyve of the aboue named William Jones and Alexander James or either of them in good and wholesome Welshe butter for the onely vse and behoofe of the said William Jones Alexander James and partners And alsoe doe at all times and from time to tyme hereafter when hee or they shalbee thereunto required make yeeld and Deliuer vpp to the said William Jones and Alexander James their executors and assignes or some of them a true iust and perfect accompt of all such some and somes of money which hee or they shall have or receyve in that behalfe And lastly Doe satisfye pay and Deliver vnto the said William Jones and Alexander⁴ or either of them their executors or assignes All such such money butter and other thinges As by the said Accomptes and euery or any of them shall appeare to belong or apperteyne unto the said William Jones, Alexander James and Partners That then this presente obligacion to bee voyd or els' to stand and Remayne in full power force and vertue.

Book of Trade, p. 76⁵

249. Humphry Hooke
Richard Vickaris

¹ The heading is in a different hand from the rest of the document.

² £1,000.

³ Sic.

⁴ James omitted.

⁵ Not dated, but probably written in 1620.

Frauncis Creswicke and
Richard Long are charged¹
To haue Transported Butter without Licence and bought out
of Markettes.

The nature
of the offences Shipped at Creekes and unlawfull places
And at vndue tymes
This appeareth
by the And in Aliens shippes
Examinacions Much of it English Butter vnder collour of Irishe and Welshe
of many And all without Licence.
witnesses, And this by indeavour to bribe the officers
And by the And some tymes with violence used to the officers and to such
officers of the as had Deputacions from the Pattentees
Portes As alsoe by sueing indighting and imprisoning of them.
And where they haue shipped vnder Licence, they haue pur-
posely caused the vessells to be made a third parte bigger
They have by fraude made the prices seeme less than in truth
they were,

This appeares
by the Examina- That in the Mayoralty of the said Humphry Hooke² vppon
cions of three complaint of the poore of Bristoll he stayed Butter from Trans-
witnesses, an portacion by daye, and by night suffered it to be shipped awaye,
officer being one he beinge himselfe in that yeare a great Transporter,

This appeares
by the That the said Richard Long in Anno 1636 being Mayor³ did
Comissioners refuse to assist the kings Comissioners, his ayde being required,
certificate and by Comission vnder the Exchequer seale.

This appeares
by their owne That they haue all added this to their fault that being Examined
Examinacions vppon oath and haueing tyme given them to peruse their bookes
of Accomptes, they denye all

This appeares
by diverse That to oppose and maintaine the suites brought against them
witnesses And by his Maiesties officers for seizure of Butter and otherwise, and
by a warrant by other prosecuto^{rs} in his Maiesties behalfe
vnder the seale
of the Company
of Marchantes

¹ This document is one of a group found in the Bankes Papers, now in the Bodleian Library, concerning an inquiry by certain Commissioners in 1636 and 1637 into the illegal export of butter and other alleged offences committed by the merchants of Bristol. See also *Cal. S.P.D. 1635-1636*, p. 240. A number of merchants were found guilty and had to compound for their offences in Star Chamber (*Cal. S.P.D. 1639-1640*, pp. 39-40). It seems clear from this and other evidence that some of the merchants at this time were engaged in a number of acts of doubtful legality, and this must be borne in mind when reading the vivid accounts of Stuart oppression given in the contemporary Adams's *Chronicle of Bristol* and in more recent times by Latimer.

² Mayor, 1629-30.

³ Mayor, 1636-37.

They vnlawfully raise monies By impositions uppon the Inhabitanes of the said Citty which they haue done for diuers yeares past and still vse¹

The quantitie thus Transported whereby the king hath byn deceived of his ordinary customes and duties where there were licences

And to the deceipt of the king and abuse of the kingdome where there hath byn noe licences appears to be aboue 1500 kilderkins of Butter yearly every yeare since the beginning of his nowe Maiesties raigne.

This appeares cleare by witnesses And by the officers of the portes And by diuers bills of Entryes vnder theire owne, theire seruantes and factors handes

Bodleian Library: MS. Bankes Papers, 55/85

250. 11 May 1639

Att a generall meetinge of the whole Society and Company of Butter² marchantes Adventurers of the Citty of Bristoll beinge in Ample number assembled in theire Common Hall called the marchantes Hall, the Adventurers for transportacion of butter by vertue of his maiesties letters patentes in that behalfe grannted did agree and allott vnto euery adventurer what proporcion and parte euery of them should deale in, as by a Catalogue or list thereof made may appeare,³ And then for that yeere were appoynted Roger Williams and Thomas Young of Newport, Robert Ragland, Thomas Kimborne and Richard Jones of Cardiffe, Ellis Price of Swanzey and Atwell Tayler of Carmarthen to bee buyers of Butter for the saide Adventurers and each buyer to have a deputation from the vndertakers soe to doe. And alsoe Thomas Stanford, William Callis, Thomas Ragland and Edmund Clymer of Bristoll Coopers were appointed to visite search and allowe of the goodnes of the said butter, and the sufficiency of Cooping and tryming the Caske.

Hall Book I, 1

PATENT FOR THE EXPORT OF CALFSKINS

251. 9 December 1641

Woorshipful⁴

p. 250

By yours directed to Mr Alderman Jones wee perceive there is

¹ A reference to wharfrage dues, first imposed in 1606.

² In a different hand from the extract.

³ The list is not given in the *Hall Book*.

⁴ *Woor* in the manuscript standing for woorshipful, woorthie sirs or some such form of address.

an Intencion To call in Mr Lewis his Pattent of calueskinnes,¹ But whether To annexe itt to the booke of Rates² or graunt itt to some other wee are doubtfull. Wee presume you are fullie sensible of how great consequence and high concernement that trade is to this Cittie, That itt is a commoditie antientlie transported From hence to the great advantage of the adjacent Counties from whom never yett yssued Any complainte (that wee haue heard) of the least dammage thereby to Any: But on the contrarie Many petitions to this present Honourable Assemblie Haue beene tendered for continewing the transportacion of them as a commoditie vselesse to theis partes.

Secondlie the prohibition of them will³ take of halfe the trade of this Citty to the vndoeing of manie families and the great decay of shippinge in this place, This commoditie being the Principle that is exported hence and occasioneth the vent of many elce besides which otherwise would not bee sent.

Thirdlie Itt may bee Ranged amongst the superfluities of this fertile kingdome, those vnder 40^s for dozen serveing for little elce then for the shoemaker to deceive his ignorant well meaninge Chapman, which being of the meaner sorte doe in this pay for the shadowe in stead of the substance, this sorte of leather not beinge durable.

Fowerthlie by this prohibition will his Maiestie suffer a diminution in his Revenew of neere 9000^l per annum in this Port alone by goodes exported and their Retoines⁴ ymported.

Theis few reasons wee offer to your consideracion, should itt proceed to a generall prohibition. But if the ayme bee to damme onlie Mr Lewis pattent and suffer Mr Maxwells⁵ To continew, wee shall then entreate you to consider the Tirannie wee shalbee vnder by encreasing the Rate, by limiting the quantitie and by the Turkishe dealinges of a Rapatious Moore that wilbee here his Agent, the woundes of whose Tallentes⁶ in most of vs Remaines to this day vncured, which observed by you wee imagine you will sooner endeavour to vnderpropp Lewis Pattent now on foote, Then

¹ The patent was held by Hugh Lewis the searcher who had assigned it to the merchants.

² I.e. permit export on payment of customs duty.

³ Followed by a deletion.

⁴ Returns.

⁵ Maxwell also had a patent to export calf-skins, and apparently his agent had been giving trouble to the merchants. Probably this refers to prosecutions for exporting in excess of the amount permitted and for exporting English hides under the pretext that they were Irish.

⁶ Tallons.

to suffer a sluise to open that will lett in such a deluge of evils,
 But aboue all elce were itt possible To Reassume the Pattent Lewis
 hath into the Cittie or Companies handes Itt would proue a
 singuler benefitt And happilie by your industrie att this time
 might become a fasable acte, especiallie yf Lewis might bee pre-
 vailed with for some consideracion to desserte his clayme. But
 yf you conceive this to bee too difficult to bringe about, And that
 itt wilbee made a generall commoditie and left at large in the booke
 of Rates, wee then offer itt to your consideracion whether Itt were
 fitt to oppose itt, Seeing Itt is more then probable that Maxwells
 Pattent wilbee called in as well as Lewis, And then wee question
 not but the trade of this Cittie wilbee maintayned with as much
 vivacitie as in times past, Nay But the Londiners bee Regulated,
 whoe haue allmost Monoplized the trade of this whole kingdome,
 especiallie were itt possible To tie this commoditie in the mar-^{p. 251}
 chantes of Bristoll as formerlie Itt hath beene by Pattent.¹ Thus
 wee haue made bould to trouble you or rather To putt you in
 mind of thinges as well yf not better knowen to your selfe then
 to vs. Therefore conclude that the passinge of a thowsand Dicker²
 of skinnes may bee allotted vnto Bristoll att such rates as the rest
 of the kingdome pay. Wee suppose wee shall Remaine in as
 good estate for that trade as heretofore. And soe with our hartie
 praiers for the happie Successe of that High Courte of Judicature
 and the continuacion of your healthes in particuler Wee Rest

Your thankfull Friendes

Thomas Colston	Willm Jones Master	
Willm Cann	Richard Aldworth	} wardens
Richard Vickris	John Langton	
Willm Fitzherbert	Robert Yeamans	
Willm Wyatt	Francis Creswicke	
Hughe Browne		

Bristoll 9th December

1641

To the woorshipful our loueing Friendes Mr Humfrey Hooke
 and Mr Richard Longe Esquires Burgesses for the Cittie of Bristoll
 in Parliament theis present

Book of Trade, pp. 250, 251

¹ See J. Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, pp. 14, 15.

² A bundle containing ten hides.

252. 22 October 1662

Alsoe at the same Courte, It was voted, ordered and decreed, that a petition shalbe made and firmed by the Master and Wardens in the name of the whole Company, directed to his Maiestie To renew the patent for transportacion of Calueskins, paying vj^d per dozen for Custome and j^s per dozen for Lycence according to the ancient patent haueing bin obstructed Twelue years by the parliament from enjoying the benefitt of the said patent according to the first Grannt And that this Company are content and doe agree To pay j^s per dosen for Lycence for transportacion of Calueskins to him who shall procure the same Lycence Soe that the Company pay but vj^d per dozen for Custome, and be at noe chardge in obteyning the said Lycense.

Hall Book I, 342

253. BULK PURCHASE OF STRANGERS' GOODS

28 June 1642

Committee to
purchase wines¹

Whereas There is a certaine parcell of strangers wines now att present offered to sale vnto the Companie of marchantes of Bristoll, wherevppon the Companie have had a meeting this present day And haue made choice of Mr Thomas Colston, Mr Miles Jackson, Mr Richard Vickris and Mr George Lane² Committees drawn out by lott To deale for the said wines. Now wee whose names Are vnderwritten Haue agreed To take such allotment of the wines aforesaid as shalbee allotted by the said Committees or any Three of them and att such prices as shalbee agreed vppon by them the said Committees or any Three of them, And to pay our parte thereof accordinglie. *The entry is followed by more than fifty signatures.*

Hall Book I, 55

254. 28 November 1643

Wines almonds
and Fruit to be
purchased³

Att a generall Assembly of this society the day and yeare above written, It was ordered and desired That Mr Henry Creswicke, Mr William Colston Sherriffes, Mr Alexander James, Mr Thomas Colston, Mr William Fitzherbert and Mr William Cann shall treat with the Hamburger touching the buying of the wines, Almons and fruite which hee hath brought to this porte ; And shall deale and bargain for the same in such manner as they shall thincke fitt, And shall have power to appoynt and allot to euery one of this Society who shall subscribe herevnto before the buying thereof such parte of the said comodities as they shall thincke

¹ In a different hand from the extract.

² *Lane* above the line.

³ In a different hand from the extract.

fitt. And the parties whose names are herevnder written who shall have any parte of the saide goodes allotted to them, doe hereby seuerally promise to pay for all such goodes as shalbe seuerally allotted to them at the rates which the same shalbe bought at And in such manner and forme as the said Committee shall thincke fitt to appointe.

And it is further desired, that the said Committee appointed as aforesaid shall speake with the Governo^r of this Citty, and desire him that the said Hamburger may not sell any of his goodes to any Forraigner, but to such persons only as are free of this Citty, For that the same is an ancient priviledge belonging to this Citty. *Sixty-three names follow.*

Hall Book I, 61v

255. 7 December 1643

Att which assembly (the said Company meeting touchinge the *p. 62* wines and fruite brought to this Citty by the Hamburger and bought and bargayned for by the Committee in that behalfe by *Wines and Fruit¹* this Society appointed) It was ordered and agreed (viz^t)

1. First that the said Company Doe agree That the fruite shalbe kepte in an entire stocke, and solde by the Committee at reasonable proffitt And that the Grocers of this Citty may have the proffer of them.

2. Secondly that every man that taketh out his lott of wine shall take them out at 15¹¹ 05^s per Butt,² Bringing in his money for his lott of fruite and wine.

3. Thirdly, That the fruite shall remaine to be solde by the Committee for the Common benefitt of all the Marchantes Vnder-takers.

4. Fourthly, That if any of the Marchantes Vndertakers shall *p. 63* desire to take out his lott of fruite ; That then it shalbe deliuered vnto him at the price which shalbe set thereon by the Committee. All which was agreed on as aforesaid, There being present in the hall they whose names are herevnder written. *There follow thirty-five signatures.*

Hall Book I, 62, 63

56. 28 December 1648

Memorandum That at this Courte Mr Walter Deyos, Mr Thomas *p. 134* Amory, Mr James Croft and Mr William Merricke or any three of them are desired to taste, treat and bargayne for a parcell of *St Lucar sack³* St^t Lucars sakes conteyning One Hundred and Thirty Buttes or

¹ In a different hand from the extract.

² 126 gallons.

³ In a different hand from the extract.

p. 135 thereabouts brought to this Porte in the shippe called the Amity of Biddeford, and alsoe a parcell of Mathera wines brought in a barque called the Love of Topsham, and to allott the same to and amongst the Company who shall firme a wryting made to that purpose.

Hall Book I, 134, 135

257. 10 February 1664

Alsoe at this Courte, Mr Anthony Gay presented to the Haule Twenty and five Pipes of Canary wines and seaventeene Buttes of Malliga being stranngers wine, whereupon Sir Henry Creswicke, Sir Robert Yeamans, Mr Alderman Yate, Mr William Willett, Mr William Merricke, Mr Thomas More, Mr William Lysons, Mr Shershaw Cary, Mr George Lane Junior and Mr Richard Ash or any foure of them are voted and ordered to taste, treat and bargain for the same. And to allott it (if they buy it) amongst the Company according to Custome. And to meete too morrowe morning at Tenn of the Clocke at the Tolzey for the doeing thereof.

Hall Book I, 367

258. 8 August 1667

Memorandum That at this Courte, Mr Charles Williams presented to the Company Thirty Buttes of Xerris wine being the goodes of strangers consigned to him, whereupon the Master, Wardens, Assistantes and Cominalty¹ did give him liberty to sell the said wines for his best advantage.

Hall Book I, 412

INVESTMENTS IN PROPERTY

259. 1662-63

June 17th By monys payd the Deane and Chapter of Bristoll For a Fine, For the renewinge the lease of the house in Corn Street For 40 years from hence

036 00 00

Treasurer's Book II, 16

260. 22 June 1676

Voted that the master, Alderman Streamer, Mr Treasurer, Sheriffe Lane, Mr Walter Tocknell, John Knight Esquire, Mr Thomas Eston, Mr Thomas Speed, Mr William Hayman and Mr Edmond Arundell or any five of them be a standing Committee to treat for and buy the manno^r of Clifton or any other landes

¹ *Coialty* in the manuscript, with a line denoting contraction.

in Fee for the use of this Hall, soe as the purchase moneys exceed not two thousand poundes. And what they doe herein shalbe binding to the Hall.

Hall Book II, 95

261. 1675-76

To 1704¹¹ : 4^s . 6^d tendered to Mr Thomas Day and deposited in my handes for his vse to pay for the purchase of $\frac{3}{4}$ partes of the manour of Clifton 1704 04 06

. . . By 150¹¹ Recd of John Knight Esquire lent by him to the hall towards the payment of Mr Thomas Dayes money for the purchase of the $\frac{3}{4}$ partes of the manour of Clifton 150 00 00

By 200¹¹ lent by Mr Thomas Earle and myselfe towards the paying of Mr Dayes money aforesaid¹ 200 00 00

Treasurer's Book II, 34

262. 10 November 1675

This yeere³ the hall contracted with Mr Roger Bathron and his trustees for the Fee and inheritance of the Mannor² of Clifton in the County of Gloucester.

Mr Thomas Day (having a mortgage of the said mannor²) would not release his interest though he promised to doe it ; And thereupon wee commenced a suite in Channcery against him.

Book of Charters I, 201

263. 10 November 1676

This yeere³ the suite betweene this Hall and Mr Thomas Day touching the mannor² of Clifton was putt to an end by mediation. And thereuppon he released all his right and title thereunto And a good estate in Fee simple was granted to severall members of this society in trust for the whole as by deedes and assureances in our public chest will appeare.

Book of Charters I, 203

264. 1676-77

To ditto paid Mr Thomas Day for his morgage on the manner of Clifton 1650 00 00

To Cash paid Roger Bathram in full for the mannor of Clifton 95 00 00

Treasurer's Book II, 35

¹ A number of other loans are recorded in the *Treasurer's Book*.

² I.e. the year 10 November 1675—10 November 1676.

³ I.e. the year 10 November 1676—10 November 1677.

265. 20 July 1686

Voted that the contract made by our Committee with Mr Edward Baugh for the George Inn¹ and the adiacent houses in the Castle is approved of and confirmed. And conveyances are ordered to be made pursueant therevnto. And the moneys to be then issued out by the Treasurer.

Hall Book II, 306

266. 10 November 1687

Also the same Committee are orderd to putt in a new spoute into the Hott well and to repaire it in such manner as they shalt thinke fitt.²

Hall Book II, 339

267. 2 February 1693

way to Hotwell
to be repaired

Voted and ordered that the way to the Hotwell be repaired from the³ King David⁴ and the boards of the penthouse putt upp by the care of the master and wardens not exceeding the summ of tenn poundes.

Hall Book II, 520

268. 6 August 1694

to treate and
conclude about
Hotwell etc

Ordered that the former Committee and the two wardens, Mr Treasurer, Mr Edmund Tocknell, Mr John Yeamans iunior and Mr Joseph Jackson to treate and conclude with the undertakers for improvement of the Hott well upon the proposalls now brought into the Hall and any 5 to make a Quorum.⁵

Hall Book III, 4

269. 20 March 1694

A Courte
Barron to
be holden

orderd That a court be kept for the Manno^r of Clifton and perambulacion of the boundes betweene this and Whitson fide on such a day as the master shall appoint.

Hall Book II, 549

270. 1698-99

September 1699. To Ditto Paid Mr Thomas Rooke and his Father in lawe Mr Whittington for their estate att Clifton

911 15 -

Treasurer's Book II, 69

¹ In Castle Street.

² A lease of the Hot Well was granted by the Society in this year. See J. Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, p. 471.

³ Followed by *Royal Oake* struck through.

⁴ At the bottom of St. Michael s Hill.

⁵ For the lease granted in 1695, see J. Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, p. 472.

271. REFUSAL TO FARM THE CUSTOMS, 1621

The Companyes answer concerning the former letter and their reasons to forbear the taking to farme of his Maiesties customes in the porte of Bristoll¹

To the righte woorshipful John

Doughtie Mayo^r of the Citty of Bristoll

Wee the Company of marchantes of the Citty of Bristoll haveing perused the Contentes of the letter (from the right honorable the Lord High Treasouro^r of England to you and vs and others of this Citty and Porte Directed) concerning his Maiesties pleasure to grannte the farme of his highnes Customes and Subsidies in all his out Portes to the Inhabitanes of the same Doe humbly pray your Woorship² to answeare on our behalfe That wee are very fearfull to vndertake the farming of his Maiesties Customes and Subsidies of this Porte in regard that our trade is greatly ympaired in respect of the restraincte thereof, and the manifould losses which wee have lately susteyned by the spoyle and Depredacion of Turakishe Pirates whoe prey vppon us and our goodes soe often and in such manner that many of our Society are Decayed thereby, and others our Cheifest Dealers in the recourse and traffique of marchandize have withdrawne their adventures, and doe ymploy the Remainder of their stockes in land and livinges in the Country, Whereby his Maiesties Customes and Subsidies of this Porte will bee rather much decreased then augmented and soe not likelie to amount to the some specified in the Medium,³ the marchantes of this Porte being few and most of them young men and smale Adventurers, Desireing rather to contynue the poore trade they now enioy (vntill it shall please god to enlarge the same) then *p. 100* any way to vndergoe the care and Charge of soe waightie and doubtfull a matter. In wittness whereof wee have Caused our Common seale to bee here vnto affixed. Dated at our Comon hall the vth of September 1621.

Book of Trade, pp. 99, 100

272. LOAN TO THE CITY

1675-76

By 863¹¹ 6^s 8^d Recd of William Hasell Chamberlaine oweing by the Chamber on a Citty seale for princepall and Interest

863 06 08⁴

Treasurer's Book II, 33

¹ The heading is in a different hand from the copy of the letter.

² *Woor*: in the manuscript. It can be extended in a number of different ways.

³ The average over a number of years.

⁴ Repayment of a loan made to the City on 15 December 1665 (*Treasurer's Book II, 21*).

273. WINE LICENCES FOR THE BRISTOL AREA*18 November 1672*

Att this Court or Hall it was voted That this society doe forthwith endeavo^r to procure the wine lycences for this Citty and Foure miles all round hereabouts to be granted to them att a reasonable rate not exceeding 600^l per annum. For should the vintners Farme them they would confine the trade of wines to the great prejudice of his maiesties customes and hold the merchants to their owne humo^{rs} as to prices etc.¹

*Hall Book II, 38***274. 1 March 1683**

It being voted that endeavo^{rs} shalbe vsed to procure a Farm of the wine licences of this Citty and the adiacent parts (now in grante to the vintners) for the benefitt of this Hall, It is now ordered that to the aforesaid purpose Sir Richard Hart, Sir John Knight Junior, Mr Arthur Hart, Mr Thomas Colston and Mr Henry Gibbes are appointed a Committee in this concerne and what they or any three of them shall doe hereabouts shall be approved of by the Hall and the chardges borne out of the Hall stock.

*Hall Book II, 212***275. PROPOSED BUILDING OF LIGHTERS***24 January 1681*

Memorandum That the Master, the wardens, Sir Richard Hart, Sir Robert Yeamans, Mr Robert Yate, Mr Thomas Earle, Mr Arthur Hart, Mr Stephen Watts, Mr John Knight junior, Mr Samuel Price, Mr John Cary and Mr George Morris or the Majority of them be a Comittee to consider of Sir Robert Yeamans his proposealls about Lighters to be built by this Hall and to report their opinions att the next Hall and the Master to appoint them to meet in the interim.²

Hall Book II, 172

¹ Colonel John Romsey, Collector of Customs, was asked to act for the Society. He did not reply, and business was then entrusted to Sir John Knight (*Hall Book II*, 42). Both this attempt and that of 1683 ended in failure.

² No details seem to be known and there are no further references to the proposal.

IX. THE MERCHANT VENTURERS AND THE PORT OF BRISTOL

The Society of Merchant Venturers in the seventeenth century gradually took over from the Corporation many of the duties of a port authority, and the exercise of these functions has left a considerable mark on its records. Its work included the maintenance and extension of the quays, the erection of cranes, control of the repairing facilities for shipping, surveying and clearing the channel, and drawing up regulations designed to ensure the safety of ships using the port. It provided mooring-posts along the river, saw to the cleaning of the quay, and made recommendations to Common Council concerning the wages of the porters. The first group of documents in this section is designed to illustrate this aspect of its work, which does not receive sufficient emphasis from Latimer.

In addition, the Society exercised considerable control over the pilots. When it first became responsible for them does not seem to be known,¹ but as early as 1623 the Mayor and Aldermen were appointing them on the Society's recommendation, and they continued to do so throughout the century. The Society also regulated the pilots' wages, and in 1684 insisted, in spite of some opposition, that pilots should give bonds of £50 for the faithful discharge of their duties.²

In 1670, again on the Society's recommendation, Common Council appointed a Haven Master whose wages were paid by the Society, and in 1671 the Society on its own authority appointed an official known as the Warner to give advice of the arrival of ships. The office of Haven Master was abolished in 1676, but was revived in 1679 when the Society presented Captain William Davis to Common Council as a suitable person for that employment. The Warner was dismissed in 1681 for inefficiency and because of his 'Profligate life and conversation', and the job was given to Captain Davis who already held the office of Haven Master.

To assist in its various commitments, which included major extensions of the quays, the Society obtained from the City the

¹ For some interesting comments on the history of pilotage in Bristol, see 'Case and opinion of Sir V. Gibbs—Respecting persons acting as Pilots within the Port of Bristol without being duly admitted.' Dated 24 October 1795. Bristol Record Office: T. C. Bundle 11 B no. 36. Learned Counsel stated there that as far back as 1684 the Merchant Venturers recommended to the Mayor and Aldermen such persons as were fit to be pilots. In fact the practice was much older.

² These points are illustrated in the documents below.

authority to collect various port dues including wharfage; anchorage, cannage and plankage; and tonnage and poundage. Wharfage was a duty first imposed by the City in May 1606 on the goods of non-freemen, but it was soon extended to include those of freemen also. At first the duty was collected by the merchants for the City, but no payments were made to the City Chamberlain after 1611, and the duty thus came into the Society's hands.¹ It was raised or lowered at the Society's discretion. The Society tried to obtain a formal lease of the duty in 1623/4, but did not in fact receive one until 1661 when it was granted a lease for eighty years.² This lease was renewed in 1690 when the Society undertook to improve the quays and erect additional cranes.³ At first wharfage was charged only on goods coming into the port, but in 1667 it was decided to charge wharfage on out-going goods also if they belonged to people who were not members of the Society. At the end of the century the Society was getting legal advice as to whether the duty could be charged on coastal as well as on foreign trade. *The Wharfage Books* survive from 1654 and some illustrations of their contents are given below.

The Merchant Venturers also had from the City a lease of the duties known as anchorage, cannage and plankage.⁴ A lease of these was granted by the City in 1601 to a body of trustees consisting of twenty-four prominent merchants for eighty years at a rent of £3 6s. 8d. a year. The lessees had to provide sufficient planks for discharging merchandise from the ships and to keep clean the slip at Hungroad.⁵ These dues, together with wharfage, were included in the new lease for eighty years in April 1661.

The duties known as tonnage and poundage⁶ were levied at the rate of 1½d. a ton on goods and 1d. in the £1 on mariners' wages, and were used by the Society to maintain the almshouse, the free school and the minister at Shirehampton.

¹ J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 64-66: *Seventeenth Century Annals*, pp. 28, 306, 438.

² By the lease of 1661 the Society undertook to enlarge and make a new Quay and to make a convenient way from Rownham Passage to the Hot Well. The Corporation was to contribute £100 to the cost. The Society surrendered its old lease of anchorage, cannage and plankage, and received a new lease of those duties, together with wharfage, for eighty years at a rent of £3 6s. 8d. There is a copy of the indenture in the Bristol Record Office, C.T.D. 00352(6) and another in the Merchants' Records.

³ One copy of the Indenture is in the Bristol Record Office, C.T.D. 00352(4) and another in the Merchants' Records.

⁴ The planks were used in loading and unloading ships. The merchants kept a stock of planks and charged for their use. Anchorage was charged on ships anchoring in the port. The nature of the duty called cannage seems to be uncertain. The word may be a corruption of Keyage or Keyadge. See heading to document, no. 361, p. 166.

⁵ Bristol Record Office, C.T.D. 00352(5). There is another copy in the Merchants' Records.

⁶ See p. 97. These duties are mentioned in the Ordinances of 1639, but they do not figure in the later accounts.

(a) *General Control of the Port and River***276. 6 November 1610**

This yeere,¹ the Channell was surveyed by Martyn Prin² and other marriners, at the appointment and Direction of the Maister and Wardens aforesaide, the charge whereof was paid out of the generall Stocke and amounted to the somme of ij^{li}. j^s

Book of Charters I, 43

277. 8 October 1661

Alsoe this yeere³ the Channell and newe groundes were surveyed by the appointement of the Maister and wardeins aforesaide, the charge whereof this yeere amounted to j^{li} xiijs vij^d

Book of Charters I, 45

278. 31 October 1614

This yeere the Channell and Newe groundes were surveyed by the appointment of the Maister and wardeins aforesaide as Farre Downe as the Flatt Holmes⁴ the charges whereof ammounted to iij^{li} xjx^s iij^d

Book of Charters I, 51

279. 1618-19

more paid a man wch did Watch the ships att the
Cay euerey night for xxvith Weekes

002 12 00

Treasurer's Book I, 5

280. 1619-20

more iij^{li} . j^s . j^d paide for the moreing postes sett
at the graving place⁵ and Rownam⁶

003 01 01

Treasurer's Book I, 6

¹ I.e. the year November 1610—November 1611.

² Bristol merchants had financed his voyage of exploration in 1603. He became a member of the Society in 1623.

³ I.e. the year October 1611—October 1612.

⁴ The Flat Holm and the Steep Holm are two islands off Weston-super-Mare in the Bristol Channel. They mark the western boundary of the City's water jurisdiction.

⁵ For the graving-place in or near the Avon Marsh, see p. 138, no. 282.

⁶ Rownham Meads on the bank of the Avon. Here was a ferry.

281. 1620-21

more xxviii^s paide for setting vp of newe poastes
 and newe setting vpp of ould poastes at Hungroade¹ 0001 08 00
 more paide for a gallon of seck that was given
 Doctor Hussey for Licence for the masons to worke
 at the slipp on hollidayes 0000 03 04

Treasurer's Book I, 7

282. THE GRAVING DOCK. 8 FEBRUARY 1621

The authoritie grannted to John Hughes for the keeping of the
 grauing place² and Dockes³

To all Christien people to whome this present writing shall
 come Wee the Maister Wardeins and Commonaltie of the Arte or
 misterie of marchantes adventurers of the Citty of Bristoll Send
 greeting. Knowe yee that vppon the humble suite and petition
 of John Hughes of the Citty of Bristoll marriner being nowe
 growne into yeares, and not able to take paines for his liveing
 into forraigne partes as heretofore hee hath bine accustomed Have
 Deputed and auctorized, and by theis presentes Doe Depute
 and aauthorize, the said John Hughes to keepe and looke to the
 graving place and dockes of this Citty lyeng or being in or neere
 Avon Marshe within the same Citty And to have and take to his
 own vse (for and towards his paines therein to bee taken) of euery
 shipp barke and vessell that shalbee brought thither to be graved
 trymmed or repaired such vsuall Fees and Duties as heretofore
 hath bine used and accustomed to bee paid, And alsoe to Survey
 and looke vnto the River and Channell there, to see that noe
 abuses be done or Comitted in or aboute the said River Channell
 graveing place and the moareing poastes and places thereabouts
 standing or being, And to present the names of all such as shalbee
 found to comitt any offence or abuse in the places aforesaid or
 any of them, Provided allwayes that the said John Hughes by
 himselfe or his sufficient Deputie Doe keepe the said graveing
 place in good order and fashion and fill vpp such holes as shalbee
 there made, and alsoe clense the said graveing place of greate
 stones and other thinges that may annoy or hurte any shipp barke
 or vessell that shalbee thither broughte to bee graved trymmed or

¹ Hungroad. Part of the Avon about a mile from its mouth where large vessels anchored.

² A dock for the repair of ships. See Millerd's *Plan of Bristol*, 1673.

³ The heading is in a different hand from the rest of the document.

repaired, and alsoe doe procure and see that the slipp there bee from time to tyme kept cleane and repaired when need shall bee, And wee doe hereby require all and euery person and persons that have intruded to keepe the saide graveing place, to Desiste from any further proceedinges in that behalfe as they will answer the Contrary. In Wittnes whereof we have Caused our Comon seale to bee herevnto sett and affixed. Dated in our Common hall the eighte Day of February Anno Domini 1620 Annoque Regni Regis Jacobi nunc' Anglie etc Decimo octavo

The Rates and fees to bee taken by the said John Hughes at the graveing place and dockes

of euery shipp with twoe topps	xij ^d
of euery barke or vessell with one top	vj ^d
of euery barke or vessell without a top	vj ^d
of euery trowe or lighter	vj ^d
of euery vessell aboue 30 tons without a top	xij ^d ¹

Book of Trade, p. 81

283. PROPOSED DRY DOCK. 20 JULY 1626

It is this Day ordered and agreed vpon that wheras Mr Robert Aldworth Alderman hath already a grante from the Surveyors of the landes and tenementes of the Maior and Cominalty² of the said Citty for the terme of Fower score yeres or therabouts at the Rent of iij¹¹ per annum, of all that Dwelling house storehouse and New Dock lately by the said Robert Aldworth³ erected and made in or neere the Marshe in a place sometimes called Welshes close, That therefore in Consideracion that he the said Robert Aldworth shall and will at his owne Costes and charges, albeit it may cost⁴ him 500¹¹, make a sufficient Dry Dock in the place where the great Dock there now is and shall and will freely and absoelutely give and bestow the same new Dry Dock vpon the Company of Marchantes and their Successors forever, There shalbe a grant in Fee farme made by the said Maior and Cominalty⁵ vnder their Common seale vnto the said Robert Aldworth his heires and assignes forever of the said Dwelling house storehouse

¹ On 9 December, 1629, the rates were fixed by Common Council on the basis of tonnage. Bristol Record Office: *Book of Ordinances and Acts*, C.T.D. 04273(2), fo. 34.

² *Coilly* in the manuscript, with a line denoting contraction.

³ For Robert Aldworth's docks, see J. Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, p. 88.

⁴ Followed by *and* struck through.

⁵ *Coilly* in the manuscript, with a line denoting contraction.

and small dock alredy made and adioynning together, Att and for the yearly Rent of xij^d per annum for ever, Provided nevertheles that ymediatly vpon confirming of the said Fee Farme as afore-said, the Master and Companie of Marchant are to assigne and grant the yearly Rent of iij^l to the said Maior and Cominalty¹ and their Successors for ever out of the merchantes hall for the time being in liew and consideracion of such Drye Dock soe made and given to the Companie as aforeaid and lieu of the Chambers suspending the former iij^l per annum Rent for the storehouse etc.

And the Company of merchantes are to paye more to the Maior and Cominalty² for the time being forever soe much yerely Rent for the ground which shalbee vsefull to make the Dry Dock as the 4 surveyors of the Citties Land and 4 others to be hereafter elected shall think meet.³

C.C.P., 1608-27, fo. 140

284. 2 October 1647

Docks⁴

Alsoe at this Courte, Mr Richard Ashe is ordered to cleare the Two dockes which are now stopped vp, with as much expedicion as may bee, And that the same shalbe cleared at the chardge of them that stopped or caused the Dockes aforesaid to be stopped vp.

Hall Book I, 103

285. 18 August 1654

A new key to be built

At this house it is agreed that there shalbe a new key made and built from the lower slip of the key to the Docke next belowe the sawpitt there.⁵

Bristol Record Office : Book of Acts and

Ordinances, 04273(2), fo. 53 v

286. 14 October 1654

Quay to be built⁶

Alsoe at this Courte, It is voted and agreed, That the Company shall contribute towards the makeing and buildinge vp of a Key, vpon the grownd lying betweene the lower slippe at the Key, and the place called Mr Aldworths key; And therevppon Mr Joseph Jackson Master, Mr Alderman Aldworth, Mr Alderman Cann, Mr Henry Creswicke, Mr Walter Tocknell, Mr William Merricke,

¹ *Coilly* in the manuscript, with a line denoting contraction.

² *Coilly* in the manuscript, with a line denoting contraction.

³ Aldworth did not accept the proposal, and the dock was not built. He did, however, erect a second dock. J. Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, p. 88.

⁴ Marginal note in different hand from the extract.

⁵ The new quay was not built till after the Restoration.

⁶ Marginal note in different hand from the extract.

Mr John Knight thelder and Mr John Knight the younger or any Foure of five of them, are authorized and appoynted, To impose and sett such rates vpon all goodes, wares and merchandizes as shalbe brought and imported into this Porte, as they shall thincke fitt, towards the makeing and buildinge of the said Key.

Hall Book I, 251

287. 14 October 1654

Alsoe at this Courte, It is ordered, that there shalbe Foure ^{Mooring} mooring poastes sett up at convenient places at of neare the ^{Posts¹} Lymekills nere the River for the better mooring of shippes which shall hereafter ride there.

Hall Book I, 252

288. 10 November 1656

Alsoe it is ordered, That the Foure moaringe postes formerly ordered to be put vpp about the Lymekills,² shalbe³ with all speed convenient sett vp, And the Pilottes saved harmelesse by the Hall against all opposers.

Hall Book I, 271

289. 10 November 1660

Memorandum. That in this yeare⁴ the new Key, extending from the lower slippe to the Key comonly Mr Aldworths Key was builte by the Master and Company of Merchantes Adventurers within the said Citty. And in consideration thereof, the Major and Aldermen of the said Citty, did graunte vnto the said Society of Merchantes, a Lease of Wharfage, Keyage and Planckage, For the Terme of Fourescore yeares.⁵ And the said Maior and Aldermen did freely give One hundred Powndes towards the buildinge thereof; the buildinge whereof coste.⁶

Book of Charters I, 171

290. EXPENDITURE ON THE NEW QUAY, 1661

May the 11th 1661

Merchantes Hall is debitor By monys paid towards the buildinge of the new Key this yeare vidz :

¹ Marginal note in different hand from the extract.

² Followed by *and* struck through.

³ Followed by *fo* struck through.

⁴ I.e. the year 10 November, 1660—10 November, 1661. The quay was built in 1661.

⁵ See p. 136.

⁶ The amount is not filled in.

		li	s	d
May 11th	By monys payd James West mason	050	00	00
June 29th	By monys payd James West more	050	00	00
July 15th	By monys payd Mr Richard Ash to pay labrers	020	00	00
August 20th	By monys payd James West mason	030	00	00
September 9th	By monys payd Richard Ash	005	00	00
14	By monys payd James West mason	020	00	00
25	By monys payd Mr Richard Ash	005	00	00
October 2 ^d	By monys payd James West	020	00	00
		<hr/>		
		200	00	00

1661

Per Contra merchantes Hall is Credito^r by monys receued
From severall persons by way of lones vidz :

		li	s	d
May 6th	By monys receued of Mr John Knight Junior	25	00	00
10th	By monys receued of Mr Alderman Joseph Jackson	25	00	00
	By monys receued of Mr John Knight gent'	25	00	00
June 29th	By monys receued of the right worshipfull Henry Creswicke maior	25	00	00
July 5th	By monys receued of Mr Thomas Langton sherrife	25	00	00
31 th	By monys receued of Mr Robert Yeamans senior	25	00	00
September 28th	By monys receued of Mr William Yeamans	25	00	00
	By monys receued of Sir Humphry Hooke Knight	25	00	00
		<hr/>		
		200	00	00 ¹

Treasurer's Book II, 13

291. 1662-63

By monys paid out of the halls stocke towards the buildinge
of the new key and the way to hoott² well For which the hall
hath Creditt giuen in that account Folio 17 384 02 04

Treasurer's Book II, 16

¹ These figures form only part of the account. There are further details
in the following years.

² *Sic.*

292. 13 October 1664

Alsoe it is voted and ordered, That there shalbe a new Crane erected at the chardge of the Haule and that the benefitt and proffitt which shall accrew thereby shalbe imployed and disposed of for the use of the Haule ; And the Audito^{res} afore named are appoynted and aucthorized to order where the said Crane shalbe builte. And to make reporte thereof to the Company at the next meeting of the Haule.

Hall Book I, 357

293. 10 November 1664

Alsoe at this Courte it was voted, That Mr Richard Ash shalbe allowed, for his attendance at the buildinge of the new Key and waytinge on the Workmen in the accomplishing thereof, Twenty Powndes.

Hall Book I, 359

294. 1666-67

To Thomas Wickham for timber and worke for the Tower slipp ¹	17 00 00
To William Jones mason for worke at the slip	05 00 00
To John Gandey the smith for Iron worke at the slip	01 14 00
To Peeter Dee for diging and cleareing Crockham Pill ²	07 00 00
... To William Jones towards pitching the kay	06 07 06

Treasurer's Book II, 22

295. 1667-68

To William Jones the mason for pitching the 2 slippes and before the hall and on the Kay as per notes	20 14 05 p. 23
.. To John Bird for a planke for the Kay	00 16 06
p. 24 .. To Peeter Dee for money he paid to workmen to cleare the entrance into Crocken Pill	04 10 00 p. 24
.. To Steven Perry for Iron worke about the slippes and moreing Rings att the Kay	07 13 00

Treasurer's Book II, 23, 24

296. 2 June 1668

It is alsoe voted, That the next weeke, the Master shall goe downe the river to veiwe the defectes thereof And to take such persons with him for his assistance therein as hee shall thincke convenient, And that Richard Locke shall attend him therein. And that the chardge thereof shalbe payed by the Haule.

Hall Book I, 430

¹ See p. 89, note 1.

² A small haven on the south bank of the Avon opposite Shirehampton.

³ In a different hand from the extract.

297. 1 March 1670

Lastly It is ordered agreed vpon and ordained for the better defraying the charges for the removing of all manner of nuisances and annoyances in the Streame, River and Harbor, and rewarding such persons as shalbe imployed in and about the same, and particularly the said Haven Master,¹ that it shall and may be lawfull to and for the Master, Wardens and Assistants of the Society of Merchant Adventurers from time to time to rate and tax every ship Barque Hoy or Vessell belonging to them, or any of them homewards bound and mooring Foure and twenty howers in the Roade, River or Harbor aforesaid any summe or summes of mony not exceeding six shillings and eight pence for every ship, barque, hoy or other vessell soe mooring as aforesaid, the same to be levied and recovered by distresse.

C.C.P., 1659-75, p. 207

298. 1670-71

To Mr James for takeing up a tree that lay in the River by order of the hall

02 00 00

Treasurer's Book II, 27

299. 1674-75

To 125¹¹ paid ditto Morse for poyntinge and pitching the Key

125 00 00

. . paid for placing of 6 postes betweene Kingroad and Hungroade

00 16 00

Treasurer's Book II, 32

300. 1675-76

June 15 To 4¹¹ gave John Johnson by order for waying the lighter suncke in Hongroade

04 00 00

Treasurer's Book II, 33

301. 10 November 1677

This yeere² the new key fell in to the River, and was ordered to be repaired att the charges of the Hall

Book of Charters I, 205

302. 15 November 1679

A mocion haveing been this day made to this house on the behalfe of the honourable Company of merchants within this City and others praying that they might have liberty grannted

¹ See p. 159, no. 341.

² I.e. the year November 1677—November 1678.

them to make a slipp att the Gibb¹ att their owne charge and to mainteyne it and keepe it in repayre from tyme to tyme, The house takeing into consideracion the great inconvenience that might ensue in case the same were grannted them And that It would occasion a continuall passage there, Carryed it in the negative And doth order that noe such liberty shallbe at any tyme hereafter grannted to the sayd Company of Merchantés And that for the future no passage be hadd or used at the said place But the same passage be wholly suppressed.²

C.C.P., 1670-87, fo. 137 v

303. 10 November 1679

... This yeere³ the key was rebuilt.

Book of Charters I, 209

304. REGULATIONS FOR THE PORT

Merchants hall 10th November 1680

That the Commander of every shipp comeing into the Port doe take care the powder belonging to the shipp be landed with all convenient speed

That they give especiall charge to the boys and servants belonging to their shipp, that they take care of their fires, that they be extinguished in due time, and that no candles be burned after due time.

That the boys and servants be not suffred to absent themselves and upon idle concerns desert and leave their shipp, espetially on sundays whereby provision is wasted and owners prejudiced.

That noe idle person be receaved or entertained on bard⁴ any shipp having no lawfull cause to be there, the enterteining of such persons being both dangerous and very prejudiciall to merchants and Owners.

That noe person belonging to any shipp or vessell doe att any time throw overboard into the River any manner of rubbish, stones, bones, coles, or ballast or any other thing whereby the River may be damnified, but that all such stuff be landed in places appointed by your worships.

That because many times, for the dispatch of shipp, Masters doe order ballast to be brought aboard by night, and also

¹ Gib Tayler near the junction of the Frome and the Avon.

² This was one of the rare occasions in the period when the Society and Common Council did not see eye to eye.

³ I.e. November 1679—November 1680.

⁴ *Sic.*

discharged by night, which must needs be much to the prejudice of the River, It is therefore humbly desired that noe ballast, coles, or like stuff be taken into or discharged out of any shipp or vessell by night, and that noe lighter loaden with ballast may be suffred to remain all night aboard any shipp vnlesse the same be sufficiently¹ lightned or hath some to order for her security.

That noe person shall throw or leave any spare ancker in the River amongst cables forasmuch as many cables have been abused by such actions.

That the Pilotts with the Havon Master doe search and sound the road every spring, and that when it soe happens that the Road is full of shipp, no Pilott shall bring in any loaden shipp before he hath consulted with the Havon Master if present for the most convenient place of birthing of such shipp.

That the Havon Master and Pilotts may have power to remove light shipp that the loaden shipp may come into their places when there is a necessity for the same.

That noe person may be suffered to fire any gunns by night, or on Sundays vnless in case of shipp being in distress.

That you will please to take your slipp at Hungroad into your consideracion, that the same may² not be broken vpp by halling of boates and rudders on it.

And my humble request to your Worshipp is that every Pilott brings³ in any shipp into the Road may be obliged to see and take care that the shipp be well and securely moared, and the anchors well placed For since your Worshipp have appointed a Haven Master the Pilotts have been careless where or how they lay their anchors or how the shipp ride, which is sometimes the charge of as great a charge to the Owners as the bringing in their shipp, and its farther humbly intreated That the Pilotts may be obliged when any accident falls out to any shipp in distress that they doe all assist with what help they cann procure with boates and men.

These orders were then read and approved of till further order.

Book of Charters II, 137

305. 25 September 1684

p. 241 Memorandum That att this Hall it was voted and ordered That the proposalls made by Joseph Horne for removing the Rocks called the Leads⁴ and subscribed by him and sherriffe Arundell

¹ ? an error for *insufficiently*.

² Followed by *be* struck through.

³ Presumably the writer meant *bringing*.

⁴ Not identified.

be considered of by Mr George Morris, Henry Daniel, John Yeamans, Edward Jones, Robert Kirke and Meredith Davis and that they consult the pilotts, and if they thinke it convenient to have them removed, to putt said Horne to worke vpon the best termes they can, and report what they shall act herein to the Hall.

1^o September 1684.

p. 242

Proposals then offered and made to the Merchants-Hall by Joseph Horne of Barton-Regis within the parish of St. Philipp and Jacob without in the County of Glouc' Coleminer

That hee will for the consideracons hereafter mencioned remove the rocks in the River called the Leads and leave no stone higher than dead low water.

That the stones when removed shalbe for the benefitt of the said Horne. And hee is att his charges to remove them.

That the Merchantes shall provide towards Toolles foure hundred and a halfe of iron and halfe a hundred of steele.

That the Merchants shall pay Horne when the worke is halfe donn Tenn pounds and when finished according to the Judgement of Two persons (one to be chosen by the Merchantes and another by Horne) the sum' of Three skore poundes more.

Joseph Horne

I H

marke

Edm^d Arundell

Hall Book II, 241, 242

306. 30 September 1684

The Committee appointed for that purpose veiued the Leads and therevpon agreed that the above named Horne should goe on with the worke as above agreed, And that the extent of the Rocks and Leads to be removed is (to witt) All the Rocks from Somersetshire side to Gloucester side from the two great stones next below the Cubits¹ downe the River to the Flatt Rock on Somersetshire side

Joseph Horne

I H

marke

John Yeamans

Hall Book II, 242

¹ Not identified.

307. 4 June 1685

ordered That part of the old Key which belongs to this Hall to amend be forthwith repaired at our chardges, and our beadle to see it donn accordingly. The like to be donn att the Back.

Hall Book II, 263

308. 10 November 1686

ordered that towards the salary of the scavenger forty shillings per annum from Christmas next be paid out of this hall by x^s. each quarter to the churchwardenes and overseeres of the poore of the parish of St. Stephen during the pleasure of this hall As long as they keep the key cleane.

Hall Book II, 315

309. 10 November 1687

Voted and ordered That the now elected and sworne master wardens and assistants doe treat with the maior and Cominalty about building a new key below the markett house at Aldworths key and for making it a free key, and for making a slipp there and building one or more Cranes thereon.

Hall Book II, 339

310. 1687-88

December 16 paid at the Bell Tavern when the master, Mr Mayo^r, Sir Richard Crumpe mett about the building of Alders key

001 01 00

February 18 paid for taking up of 15 tonns of stones out of the River at 4d per tonn

000 05 00

Beadle's Book I, 7

311. 1688-89

April 30 paid Robert Millard Mason for taking a great topstone out of the key being 3 daies in getting of him upp

002 : 11 : 00

May 10 spent at the Star on the key when the master, Mr Mayo^r with others went to view Alders key and graving place as by note

001 : 00 : 00

Beadle's Book I, 15

312. 31 January 1688

ordered That the ladders att the Back and all necessary reparations there and att the key be forthwith repaired and made by the master and wardens.

Hall Book II, 354

313. *PROPOSED NEW QUAY. 19 May 1688*

some of the Committee for procuring a new free Key mett and then ordered the following lettere etc

merchants Hall 19^o May 1688

Gentlemen,

It is desired by the hall that for the speedy effecting our desires in the enlarging the key from Aldworths dock downe the River 300 foot according to our late agreement with the City you would forthwith make applicacion to the Lords of the Treasury by petition (in the name of the whole Society) for the surveying the place¹ intended for the said additionall new key

That upon returne made of the conveniency thereof a grante (as was formerly in the like case) may be obteyned for making the same a free Key, And on thother side of this paper you may be furnished with arguments to answere all objections that may be raised against it. If you see please consult Mr John Romesey² now in London and Mr Thomas Edwards Attorney (whome youle find at his Chamber in Cliffords Inn) in the framing of the petition and following those methods as may be adviseable in the premisses And make vse of any person (for your own ease) to sollicite in this business and the disbursements in this affaire wilbe (as formerly ordered) defrayed by Mr Edwards or else at Mr Coles returne shalbe reimbursed by the hall.

Wee are

Gentlemen

To Mr Edward Colston

Your loving freindes

Thomas Cole William Jones

Wm Donning Master

and Richard Cary

Peter Saunders

Merchantes

Rich^d Champneys } wardens

Superscribed To Mr Thomas

Cole Merchant lying att the 3

tubb in Bredstreete

London

Hall Book II, 359³

314. *PETITION REGARDING PROPOSED QUAY. 1690*

To the Right Honourable the Lords Commissioners of their Maiesties⁴ Treasury

¹ Followed by *intended* struck through.

² John Romsey then Town Clerk of Bristol.

³ The arguments to be used in support of the Society's petition are given in *Hall Book II*, 360. They are substantially the same as those given on pp. 150, 151.

⁴ *Maties* throughout the document with a line to denote contraction.

The humble petition of the Master Wardens and Assistants of the Society of Merchants Adventurers within this Citty of Bristol on behalf of themselves and the rest of the same Society

Sheweth

That the Key of Wharf of this City haveing Severall disadvantages as well by its being too Short as wanting depth of Water for ships at all tides to come and goe upp and down the River hath occasioned great loss and dammage to the Merchantes and Traders in this Port, and often to their Maiesties. Besides of late years the Road of Hungroad which in part supplied the defects of the saide Wharfe or Key, being now spoiled and become almost vseless, Its adjudged absolutely necessary to enlarge the Key not only to prevent the like losses But to secure the trade of this City, which unless timely prevented will soon decay for want of good and safe Ports and places for discharge. Your petitioners have therefore hereto affixed some reasons for enlarging the said Key or Wharfe, Which they humbly leave to your honnours Consideracion. And pray that ye would be pleased to grant a Warrant for making such intended necessary Enlargements of the said Key a free place for lading and unlading of all lawfull goods and Merchandizes

And they shall Ever pray &c

Arthur Hart

Thomas Cole

Cha : Pope

1689

Tho. Willett

Giles Merricke Mr

Jn^o Seward

John Yeamans Junn^r

W^m Donning

W^m : Merricke

Richard Lane

Peter Saunders

Edw Tocknell

Its humbly conceived that the Continueing or lengthening of the Key from the lowest part of the present key about 420 foote downe the River where there is a greater depth of Water on all tides And the making and building sufficient Slipps and building Cranes for the speedy lading and unlading of goods (As is intended) will be necessary & Convenient For these (amongst other) reasons

1. By this enlarging the Key there wilbe depth of Water for ships to goe to and from the Key aswell on neep as spring tides and thereby many losses which happen to ships before there is water to bring them to the key wilbe prevented, By this means all ships haveing ye benefitt of takeing fair windes to goe to Sea every tide.

2. This Enlarging of the key will prevent the great troubles and frequent dammages which are occasioned by lading and unlading over other Ships as tis at the present Key by reason of its straitnes, and be a meanes to dispatch the same in few daies, and hereby their Maiesties will advance their Customes which are abated by allowance for the frequent dammages that happen to goods for want of a better Key.

3. Hereby their Maiesties wilbe at less Expences in officers For at present Ships do ly 7 or 8 dayes with Tidesmen and other officers on board before they can have water to come to the Key to unlade, And when there by reason of their discharging over other Vessells are continued longer on duty and charge then they would do were the said Key lengthened.

4. The Surveyor^{rs} and other their Maiesties cheif Officers will be the better able to inspect the Actions of Merchants Saylers Tidesmen and other inferiour officers for their Maiesties advantage.

5. For want of a longer Key and by means of the decay of Hungroad as aforesaid the Merchants have been forced many times to unlade in the open road called Kingroad to the great loss of their Maiesties and the Proprietors of the lading and Cargoe.

Endorsed : Whitehall Treasury

Chambers January the 27th

1689

Petition of the Merchants of Bristoll Praying a Warrant to Enlarge the Key or Wharfe of the Citty to make the same more commodious for Trade

R. to Com^{rs} Customs Ent^d

P.R.O., Treasury Books, T 1/8 no. 17

315. 21 June 1690

ordered and agreed that foure hundred poundes be taken vpp att interest upon the credit of the Hall and that our seale be given for the same. And when the same is taken vpp It shalbe payd over to Mr Treasurer, who shall issue forth two hundred poundes thereof to the City for our Fine for the new lease of the key anchorage etc¹ And the other two hundred poundes thereof towards repairing and building the key as the Committee for that purpose shall from time to time order it which committee is the master, wardens, Mr Seword, Mr Tocknell, Sir John Knight, Mr Lane, Mr Pope, Mr Edward Jones or any Foure of them, of which the master to be one,² who are to be sumoned by the master and

¹ See p. 136.

² of which the master to be one above the line.

to meete from time to time in our Hall, and have power to pull downe¹ such part of the new built markt house as they shall thinke convenient. And Munday morning next art 9 oclock is appointed to be the First Meeting.

Hall Book II, 446

316. 13 October 1690

Voted That the Committee for building of the new key doe hasten the finishing of the new Crane and to employ it when donn and to consider of Thomas Hilmans petition concerning it and report his proposalls to the next Hall.

Hall Book II, 456

317. 18 April 1691

p. 468 It being putt to the vote, whether wee shall build any more of the new key this summer or not, It passed in the negative.

p. 469 . . . Mr Howes letter about a project for morring chaines was read but rejected as not convenient in this Port.

Hall Book II, 468, 469

318. 22 June 1691

voted that Thomas Hilman be turned out of his collectorship of Cranage at the 24th July next unless he pays his rent to that day and gives security for payment of his rent p' future as he promised to doe.

Hall Book II, 472

319. 26 February 1692

Committee for
building the
Key to take
upp money

to make
Cranes inspect
the Back

voted That the master wardens and assistants doe forthwith proceed in building the new Key and take up moneys necessary for the carrying of it on, and are chosen a Committee for this worke. The said last named Committee to make one or more Crane or Cranes slipp or slippes on the said intended new key and to inspect the condition of the Back neere the Cranes there and to enquire into the Citty leases at whose charges the said Back is to be repaired.

Hall Book II, 494

31 May 1692

An artist to be
employed to
inspect the
Cranes in
London

voted and orderd that the master doe employ some able artist to inspect the Cranes in London, in order to making the like on

¹ Followed by a deletion.

our intended new Key, and he to gratify such person as he shall thinke fitt.¹

Hall Book II, 498

321. 11 October 1692

ordered and voted that six hundred poundes be taken vpp of ^{600^{ll} to be} Mr William Swymmer² to reimburse what he hath advanced ^{taken upp} and shall aduance towards building the new Keys and Cranes, ^{towards} building Key and that the seales of our Hall be given him therefore with dates according to the seuerall times of his advancing the moneys by him or as the master shall settle it.

Hall Book II, 502

322. 4 May 1693

The Committee about the Cranes reported they treated not with ^{Committee} Thomas Smith because Mr Henry Daniel (a member of this Hall) ^{to treat with} desired to have the management thereof either under a yeerely ^{Mr Daniel and} rent or att a salary And hereupon Tis voted and ordered that the ^{to recompence} master, the wardens, Mr Treasurer, Mr Tocknell, Mr William Merrick and Mr John Yeamans be a Committee to treat with Mr Daniel about the premisses and to make satisfaction to Mr Smith for the time he hath acted and for the settling the rates and the wharfe to prevent shipps from moaring to the prejudice of lighters coming under the Cranes.

ordered that the former Committee for the Key etc take upp ^{Committee} more money if they see occasion for carrying on the building of ^{for Key etc to} the Key and Cranes etc and give our common seale for security. ^{take upp more} money Also they are desired to take care that all loose stones be taken vpp out of the River and vsed on the Key.

Hall Book II, 526

323. 11 May 1693

the 11th May 1693 the Comittee about the Cranes mett

p' Mr Robert Yate p Mr Edward Tocknell

p' Mr Thomas Richardson p Sir William Merrick

p Mr William Daines p Mr John Yeamans

p Mr William Swymmer

Then agreed and ordered that Mr Henry Daniel shall on Munday next enter upon the management of the two Cranes and receive the perquisits thence arising, He giving a bond for discharge of his place.

Hall Book II, 527

¹ No further information is available.

² Followed by a deletion.

324. 7 March 1695

Back and Key
to be repaired
Slipp neer
Tower to be
filled up etc

Ordered that the Back and Key be repaired where there is occasion, and that the slipp neere the Tower on the Key be made even with the other parts of the same Key, and be discontinued from being a slipp any longer. And the master wardens and Treasurer to see it don and to agree with Mary Man for the damage don by her trough¹ to the middle slipp on the Key.

To recommend
to the Maior a
fitt person to
looke after the
River etc

And they are desired to appoint a fitt person to look after the new slippis made upon each side of the River and to recommend him to Mr maior.

Hall Book III, 28

325. 10 November 1696

William
Hannam to
looke after the
Graving place

Ordered That William Hannam doe officiate at the Graving place² dureing the sickness of William Steele.

Hall Book III, 85

326. 22 June 1697

Committee
about Crane

Memorandum That this Court of Hall orderd that the master, wardens, Captain Price and Mr Tocknell take care to make a longer neck to the lesser Crane at Aldworths Key and to remove the banck there.

Hall Book III, 91

327. 11 March 1698

comittee about
the porters
rates and the
duties of
Cranidge and
to see the Key
cleansed

Voted That the Master, two Wardens, Mr John Day, Mr James Hollidge, Mr Charles Jones and Mr John Yeamans sen^r or the major number of them be a Committee to enquire into the rates of the Porters³ and the duties of Cranage and to settle the same and report it to this Hall that it may be Confirmed, And further to take care to remove the present filth on the Key, and to keepe the same cleane for the future.

Hall Book III, 119

328. 10 November 1698

Comittee about
mooring posts

The former Committee about fitting of mooring posts upon the bancks of the river is continued.

Hall Book III, 130

¹ See p. 10, note 1.

² See p. 138, no. 282.

³ The Society had been consulted over the Ordinances and Constitutions for the Porters in 1671. See *Ordinances for City Companies*, p. 21 (Bristol Record Office: C.T.D.04369(1)). In 1699 disputes between the merchants and the porters over rates of pay were referred to the Society. C.C.P., 1687-1702, fos. 181-184.

329. 15 June 1699

Memorandum that at this Court or Hall That the former Com-
 mitte being the standing Committee are appointed to cause the
 loose rocks and other nuisances in the River in Hungroade and
 vp and downe the clift to be taken away and removed as soon as
 conveniently may be and that they imploy proper persons in order
 thereunto the charge whereof to be defrayed by this Hall.

Hall Book III, 146

330. 10 November 1699

Voted that the Master and Wardens (in behalfe of this society) doe
 apply themselves to the Mayor and Common Councill to take
 into consideracion the decay of the havens of this port and to
 procure an act of parliament for the repairing and preserving the
 same river by such methods as shalbe thought fitt.

Hall Book III, 159

(b) *The Pilots, the Haven Master and the Warner.*

331. The pilottes oathe and wages allowed by the Commissioners the
 Judges of the Admiralty anno Domini 1605.

You shall faithfully truely and without Delay, accordinge to
 your skill and experience of saylinge, within the Rivers of Severne,
 Havon and Froome, Carry leade and Conduct out from the backe
 and key of Bristoll, vnto the Portes of Kingroad and Hungroade,
 to the backe or key of Bristoll, all manner of shippinge (beinge by
 the Custome of this Citty vsually brought in and out by a pilott)
 vpon request made vnto you by the Owners proprietaries and
 Maisters of such shippinge, takinge for your paines therein such
 ordinary Fees, which are vsually allowed for pilotadge of shippinge
 accordinge to their burthen. You shall likewise doe and performe
 any other thinge or thinges apperteyninge to the office of a pilott,
 as well tendinge to the safe Conductinge in and out of shippinge,
 and the Preservacion of the goodes therein laden, as to the main-
 tenance and preservacion of the Portes and Rivers aforesaid, Soe
 helpe you god and the Contentes of this booke.

xix^o Septembris 1605

Mr. Christopher Kedgwyn

Mayor

The Pilottes Antient wages as it was presented per Jurat'

Every barke of a Burgesse of the towne from Kingroad to
 Hungroade or the Pill, ij^s vj^d, from thence to Bristoll, ij^s vj^d.

Every shipp vnder the burthen of C. tons being a burgesse is to pay from Kingroad to Hungroad fyve shillinges, and soe to Bristoll fyve shillinges, and yf above the burthen of C. tons vj^s viij^d to Hungroad from Kingroad

Every stranger to pay for every barke or small shipp of Fyftie tons or vnder: vi^s, from Bristoll to Hungroad, and soe vi^s to Kingroad and every bigg shipp to pay viij^s.

Mr Guy Mayor 19^o May; 1619

None to take for shippes vnder lx tons aboute iiij^s, and for shippes of C tons fyve shillinges, and for shippes of bigger or lesser burthen not aboute that rate.

Per me Israelem Gleson

Registrarium Curiae Admiralitatis Bristoll.

Book of Trade, p. 169

PROPOSED EXAMINATION OF MARINERS

332. *The following extract is taken from a letter to John Guy in 1621 when the Company was endeavouring to secure an extension of its privileges.*

. . . In the bill or petition which is this Day sent vnto you by John Hayter there is omitted the examinacion and admittance of marriners which if your Woorship shall thincke fitt may be added (in these wordes) Vizt And alsoe to examine and admitt All and whatsoever marriner and marriners that shall vndertake the Charge or Government of any shippes or shipping belonging or apperteyning to this Citty and Porte of Bristoll and members of the same. . . .¹

Book of Trade, p. 85

333. LICENSING OF A PILOT. 1623

xx^o Martii 1622²

This Day George Bryan of the Citty of Bristoll Marryner³ vppon certificat made to Mr Maior and the Aldermen by the Master and Companie of Marchauntes of the sufficiency and experience (in the Arte of Navigacons)⁴ of the said George is admitted and allowed by the said Maior and Aldermen to be a common Pilot of this Citty for the conductinge of shippinge to and from the

¹ For complaints about mariners and boatmen, see p. 10, no. 8.

² 1623 modern style.

³ Followed by *is* struck through.

⁴ *in the Arte of Navigacons* above the line.

key of Bristoll into from and out of the Roades of Kingrode and Hungroade To haue and execute the same place as longe as he shall well and honestly demeane himselfe therein.

C.C.P., 1608-27, fo. III

334. PILOTS' WAGES. 27 FEBRUARY 1647

And alsoe vpon Peticion of the Pylottes at Hungroade for the Pilots wages augmenting of the wages of the Toweboatmen¹ from Sixpence to Nine pence a single Towe, It was ordered and agreed in manner followinge (viz^t) That the pay for the Towboatmen, the pay for the Towboates and the wages of the Pylottes formerly payd shall contynue as it hath bin formerly and not augmented other then as followeth (viz^t) That the Toweboatmen shall have duringe the winter halfe yeare (viz^t) from the Nine and twentieth day of September to the Five and Twentieth day of March Eight pence a peece for a single Towe, And for the Summer halfe yeare shall have but sixpence a peece for a single Towe as formerly. And the Company are required to pay no more. And the Pylottes are ordered to take notice, That they from henceforth bringe in the shippes that shall arive in this Porte, one by one as they arrive in order, from tyme to tyme vnles there shalbe some vrgent occasion to the contrary.

Hall Book I, 96

335. 27 February 1647

Alsoe, Thomas Batten Marriner is elected and chosen a Pilotte Thomas Batten
for this Channell and Porte of Bristoll, And is to have a Lycence elected a
granted vnto him for the same. Pilott²

Hall Book I, 96

336. 23 October 1647

Alsoe at this Courte it is voted and ordered, That there shall Pilots be a warrant sent to the Pilottes at Hungroade, That they shall forthwith put vp Postes in the Ancient places for Sea markes.

Hall Book I, 105

337. 5 July 1653

It is alsoe voted that Lysons Baker shalbe admitted a Pilott Lysons Baker
of this Porte. chosen a
Pilott

Hall Book I, 238

¹ Tow-boats were used to take big ships up to Bristol.

² In a different hand as are marginal notes in the next four extracts.

338. 10 November 1654

Pilot

Alsoe Peter Dee is allowed to be a Pilott for this Porte, And that hee shalbe sworne according to the Custome of the Citty.

Hall Book I, 255

339. 10 December 1660

Pilots

Alsoe at this Courte, vpon the Peticion of John England Marriner; It was grannted that the said John England shalbe one of the Pilottes of this Citty and porte of Bristoll, And is admitted thereunto, with all the priviledges thereunto belonging. And is to be established and confirmed therein by Warrant from the Right worshipfull the Maio^r of this Citty, vnder the Common Seale.

Hall Book I, 318

340. THE SOCIETY'S CERTIFICATE CONCERNING A PILOT

To the right Worshipfull John Knight Esquire Mayor of the Citty of Bristoll and to the Worshippfull the Aldermen his brethren.

These are to certifie your Worships That att a generall assembly of the Worshippfull Society of Merchant Adventurers within this Citty mett in their Common Hall the Eleaventh day of Octobr' instant 1670 William Jeffries the elder of Ham-Greene within the parish of Portbury mariner was elected and chosen A Pilott for the conveying of Shippes and other Vessells vpp and downe the River belonging to this Citty in the roomth and place of Robert Pope lately deceased and hee was then ordered to attend your Worships in order to the takeing his oath for the carefull discharge of his duty in the said Office.

Fra: Yeamans Jun^r

Clerke to the said Society.

xv^o Octobr' 1670
Bristoll'.

It is ordered that William Jefferies be admitted into the Office of a Pilott of this port to hold and enioy the same as long as hee shall faithfully demeane himselfe therein

John Knight Maio^r

Robert Cann Aldⁿ

Walter Sandy Aldⁿ

John Wright Aldⁿ

Book of Charters II, 102

341. FIRST APPOINTMENT OF A HAVEN MASTER

1 March 1670.

Whereas the preservacion of this Porte and Haven is of very great concernement to the flourishing estate and prosperity of this Citty. And for the better preventing of nuisances that are daily done and comitted therein It hath beene thought necessary by the Master Wardens Assistants and Company of the Society of Merchant Adventurers within this Citty that an officer be appointed and established to be called and knowne by the name of the Haven Master of this Porte, And have recomended one John Jones Marriner for the vndertaking of the said office and imployment.

It is this day ordered ordained and enacted that the said John Jones shall have and enjoy the said office and imployment of Haven Master of this porte, soe long as he shall well behave and demeane himselfe therein, and shall have and perceive¹ the Sallary of Twenty pounds a year payable by him quarterly by equall porcions by the Treasurer or other officer of the said Company in that way and manner according as the Master Wardens and Assistants of the Company aforesaid shall order and direct.

That the said John Jones and such other persons and persons as hereafter shalbe elected and chosen by this house to the said office of Haven Master shall observe such rules and instruccions as are herein after mencioned, and such other orders and direccions as shalbe though meete and convenient to be made and ordained by the Mayor Aldermen and Common Counsell of this Citty for the time being. . . .

C.C.P., 1659-75, p. 205²

342. 30 March 1670

Alsoe it is voted, That the wages of John Jones Marriner Havon Master for this Porte shall begin and be payd from Christmas last past.

Hall Book I, 457

343. APPOINTMENT OF A WARNER. 19 JULY 1671

Then ordered that Peter Dee³ be constituted Warner in this Port to give advice of the arrivall of all shippes and that a patent be made him accordingly to continue his office during the pleasure of this society.

Hall Book II, 12

¹ *Sic.*

² The powers and duties of the Haven Master are then stated, pp. 205-207.

³ He had been made a pilot 10 November 1654. See p. 158.

344. 12 April 1675

Voted, that Five poundes be likewise exhibited to John Jones havonmaster towards rebuilding of his house lately consumed by fire (as is sett forth by his petition now exhibited to this Hall).

Hall Book II, 82

345. 17 October 1676

ordered that notice be given by our beadle to John Jones the havon master to attend this Hall the 10th November next to answer to such thinges as shalbe then objected against him touching his neglect of duty in his said office.

Further ordered that the office of Havon master be henceforth discontinued as a needlesse and impertinent thinge to continue it. And that the pilots have notice of this order.

Hall Book II, 102

346. 10 November 1676

Voted that Mr Walter Tocknell, Mr William Willett, Mr Thomas Earle, John Knight Esq^r, Mr William Hayman and Mr William Doning or any foure of them are a Committee to be a checque on the seuerall Pilotts belonging to this Port in relation to their wages and else.

Hall Book II, 105

347. 10 November 1679

It being now found necessary to have an Havon master within this port It is therefore voted that that office be revived, and that Captain William Davis of Sherehampton be (on his petition now exhibited) presented to the Mayo^r Aldermen and Cominalty as a fitt person for that employment.

Hall Book II, 148

348. 8 December 1679

Alsoe whereas William Davis of Sherehampton hath, bin presented to the Maior Aldermen and Common Counsell of this City as a fitt person for discharging of the office of Havon-master within this City and Port And hath been by them approved and elected into the same office accordingly, But is left to be gratified by this Hall for his paines therein, It is therefore voted and ordered that the said William Davis shall during the pleasure of this Hall receave as a salary from us for his paines in discharging of the said office of Havonmaster the sum of thirty pounds per annum And the master wardens and assistants or any Five of them are

desired to give him instructions from time to time for his better manngement of the same office, And they the said master, wardens, and assistants or any five of them are elected a Committee to consider how to¹ raise this salary out of the Anchorage.²

ordered that the said salary shall commence and begin to be paid to the said William Davis from Christmas next.

Hall Book II, 154

349. DISMISSAL OF THE WARNER. 3 MAY 1681

Item Whereas Peter Dee of Sherehampton in the Country of Glouc' seaman was in the moneth of July 1671 att the desire of this society appointed by the Mayo^r. Burgesses and Cominalty of this City Warner to give notice and advise of all shippes and other vessells comeing from beyond the seas and arriveing in this Port and had a patent therefore grannted him as well vnder the seale of the office of Mayoralty of this City as the Corporacion seale of this society to continue in that office dureing their pleasure, Now forasmuch as the said Peter Dee hath of late time been very negligent in the execucion of his said Office and demanded Fees after the arriveall of severall shippes though hee gave no notice of their comeing in and is a person of a Profligate life and conversation It is voted and ordered that the Master, Mr Richard Lane, Mr Thomas Eston, Mr George Hart and Mr John Knight Junior or any of them doe in the name of this society apply themselves to the Maio^r Aldermen and Cominalty (when in Counsell assembled) and desire that they would concurr with vs that the said Peter Dee may be dismissed from his said office and his said Pattent revoked.

Hall Book II, 176

350. 20 June 1681

Memorandum voted at this Court or Hall that Captain William Davis of Sherehampton having been presented to and approved by the Maio^r and Aldermen to be warner in the roomth of Peter Dee lately ejected, be ratified and confirmed in the same office and that a Patent be made him accordingly.

Hall Book II, 179

351. 10 November 1684

Voted and ordered That the present Pilotts and all pillotts to be elected hereafter shall give bond of Fifty pounds penalty for the Faithfull discharge of their offices and for Assisting all shippes

¹ To above the line.

² See p. 136.

and vessells in distresse or else to be outed of their offices . . . And that John Homer one of the present Pilotts be discharged from his office unles he shews good cause to the contrary att the next sitting of the hall.

Hall Book II, 247

352. PILOT'S BOND. NOVEMBER 1684

A new pilott

Daniel Farwell de Crockham Pill in Comite Somersett mariner tenetur Richardo Lane mercatori modo magistro societatis Mercatorum infra Civitatem Bristoll' in 50¹¹. Dat. 14^o die Novembris Anno Regni Regis Caroli secundi etc xxxvj^o 1684

Whereas the above bound Daniel Farwell vpon his instant intreaty and petition is admitted into the office of a pilott within this Citty and port dureing the pleasure of the said Society of Merchants in Bristoll And by meanes thereof will receive great benefitt and advantage by Fees and perquisitts incident to the saide office Now the condicion therefore of this obligacion is such that if the above bound Daniel Farwell doe and shall from time to time and att all times dureing his continuance in the said office of a pilott within this Citty and port faithfully discharge the same office and duely demeane himselfe therein And shall readily and diligently as often as hee is thereto required assist and helpe all seamen, shippes and goodes within the said port which shall happen to be in distresse or want of helpe And alsoe if the above bound Daniel Farwell shall not att any time hereafter bring vpp any
 p. 250 shipp or vessell vpwads of sixty Tonns to the Key or back of Bristoll without the License of the Mayo^r of the said Citty for the time being first had and obteyned That then this obligacion to be voyd or else to stand in full force.

John Jones the like bond.

18^o Novembris 1684 Then put into the chest the two bonds for pilotage given by John Jones and Daniel Farwell . . .

The like bond was given by Philip Peirce an old pilott

The like bond was given by William Hort a new pilott

The like bond was given by John Baker a new pilott

The like bond was given by Water Daniel an old pilott

The like bond was given by John Sandy a new pilott

The like bond was given by Thomas Wills a new pilott . . .¹

Hall Book II, 249, 250

¹ Only one original copy of a pilot's bond in the seventeenth century seems to have survived. It is preserved in the Merchants' Records tied up with a large number of eighteenth-century bonds.

353. 8 January 1685

... ordered that both old and new pilotts that have refused to give bond be henceforth dismiss and the clerke is to give notice hereof in writing to the Havonmaster and said pilotts.

Hall Book II, 254

354. 10 November 1690

... Voted and ordered that the Mayo^r Aldermen and Common Counsell be applyed to and desired that they would be pleased to make some By lawes for their better regulateing of the pilotts and incourageing them in the performance of their duties.

Hall Book II, 461

355. 10 November 1691

... Ordered that Roger Romney be on his petition now exhibited and for his readiness in weighing the shippes lately in distress in the River presented to Mr Maior as a fitt person to be a pilott within this Port.

Hall Book II, 482

356. 18 May 1696

p. 66 orderd that the havonmaster and all the pilotts be summoned
p. 67 to attend the next Hall, and in the meane to sound the channell
and to observe the sands and where¹ fitt to place buoys.

Havon master
and all the
pilotts to attend
next Hall and
in the interim
to sound the
Channell etc.

Hall Book III, 66, 67

357. 25 June 1696

The havon-master and John Homer, Howell Bevan, John
Cuttiford, Marke Fudger and John Jones Pilotts appeared and
complaining that Abraham Badman and William Jerman have not
given bonds as usuall, It is ordered that vnless they give bonds
within a fortnight they shalbe dismiss. Alsoe the master is desired
and impowerd to provide Buoys and other necessaries for the
better discouery of sands and dangerous places in the River.

Report of
pilotts

orders to
provide buoys
and other
necessaries

Voted and ordered that Sir William Daines, Mr Tocknell, Mr
Cary and Mr Hollidge draw upp heads to be offerd to the maior
and Aldermen for the better regulating of the pilotts and of the
shippes trading to this port.

Committee to
draw vpp heads
to maior etc
about pilotts
etc.

Hall Book III, 70

¹ Followed by an indecipherable word.

358. 11 March 1698

Complaints being made by Captain Earle against Kindness one of the Pilotts for seuerall abuses in exacting fees, It is voted and ordered that he be summoned before the Maior and aldermen to answer said complaint. And vnless hee shews good cause to the contrary to be dismissed his office¹

Hall Book III, 119

see on the other side²

Kindness
excused

The said Kindness afterwards appearing and makeing some plausible excuse is for the prsent continued but on the next offence to be dismissed from his office of a Pilott within this Port

Hall Book III, 120

(c) *Duties collected by the Society*

359. WHARFAGE RATES, 1606

The auctoritie of the Mayor and Cominaltie vnto certeyne persons to Collect the Dueties of wharfadge towards the repaireing of the Back and Key³

The document recites that the Back and Key, which are the usual places of lading and discharging goods, have of late cost above £1500 in building and are now in great decay. They cannot be repaired without great charge which must be levied on goods laden and discharged there. In accordance with an ordinance of Common Council, the Mayor and Commonalty have therefore authorized Emanuel Ashe and John Gonning to collect from every ton of goods loaded or discharged at the Back or Key the sums set out in the attached schedule under the name of wharfage to be paid by the owners, laders and bringers of goods for maintaining the Back and Key. Dated the last day of June, 4 James I.

p. 44

Inprimis of euery tonne of oyle, trayne,⁴ wine, oade,⁵ Iron, mader,⁶ sugars, Reisons, figgs, Allam, Prunes, Fernando bucke,⁷ Campecha,⁸ St Martens wood,⁹ Rice, and Anniseedes which shalbee brought¹⁰ to this Citty from beyond the seas shall pay

vj^d

¹ There is a large cross in the margin beside the entry.

² Written in a different ink.

³ The heading is in a different hand from the rest.

⁴ Train oil. Cod oil from Newfoundland.

⁵ Woad.

⁶ Madder, used in dyeing.

⁷ A corruption from Pernambuco, Brazil. A red wood used in dyeing.

⁸ From Campeachy, on the west coast of Yacatan, Central America. A dye-wood better known as logwood.

⁹ In Mexico.

¹⁰ Brought above the line.

Item euery tonne of ledd that shalbee laden from hence shall pay	vj ^a
Item euery last ¹ of single band pitch shall pay	vj ^a
Item euery last of Double band pitch shall pay	ix ^a
Item euery last of Tarr shall pay	vj ^a
Item euery tonne of Rasons and hearth pitch shall pay	ij ^a
Item euery bagge of Spanishe wooll shall pay	ij ^a
Item euery sacke of hopps either inwards or outwards	
Cont CC waighte and soe after that rate	j ^a
Item euery thowsand of wett fishe shall pay	ij ^a
Item euery thowsand of Dry fish shall pay	j ^a
Item euery tonne of Venigar shall pay	iiij ^a
Item euery hundred of Delbordes ² shall pay	ij ^a
Item euery mast vnder xij inches through shall pay	j ^a
Item euery mast above that thicknes shall pay	ij ^a
Item euery last ³ of herring shall pay	iiij ^a
Item euery packe of broade Cloth Containing x Clothes and soe after that rate shall pay	iiij ^a
Item euery packe of Irishe ruggs or Frizes shall pay	ij ^a
Item euery hundred waighte of all Kinde of spices shall pay	j ^a
Item euery Chest of Callicowe Cloth shall pay	iiij ^a
Item 80 bushells of all sortes of grayne shall pay	iiij ^a
Item euery tonne of salte shall pay	j ^a ob
Item euery Fardell ⁴ of Lynnen Cloth shall pay	ij ^a
Item euery tonne of Copper, tynne and bell mettle shall pay	vj ^a
Item euery thowsand of murkins, ⁵ sheepe fells or Conny skins shall pay	ij ^a
Item euery tonne of Samon shall pay	vj ^a
Item euery tonne of beere shipped as marchandize shall pay	iiij ^a
Item euery threescore Dozen of Calveskyns and so eafter that rate shall pay	vj ^a
Item euery C waighte of Wax shall pay	ob
Item euery tonne of licoris shall pay	iiij ^a
All other kindes of wares and marchandices not here nominated shall pay vppon euery xl ^s value thereof	j ^a

¹ Twelve, sometimes fourteen, barrels of pitch.

² Deal boards.

³ 12,000 fish. Also twelve barrels.

⁴ A bundle of unspecified size.

⁵ Morkins. The fells of unborn lambs.

or otherwise to bee rated by the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Bristoll for the tyme being.¹ *Book of Trade*, pp. 43, 44

360. 1610

Received of him more that he received of John Gonynge of the wharfage moneye² xx¹¹

Bristol Record Office : Mayor's Audits 04026(16), p. 76

361. KEYAGE, PLANKAGE, WHARFAGE. 1620

The auctoritie grannted to Phillip Dickinson to Collect the dueties of Keyadge³ plancadge and wharfage

To all Christian people to whome this present writing shall come Wee the Maister Wardens and Comonaltie of the Arte or Mistery of Marchantes Adventurers of the City of Bristoll Send greeting in our Lord god everlasting.

Whereas at the late generall Courte of the Society of the said Company in ample manner assembled, yt was enacted and ordayned by full Consent of the said Courte and by the auctoritie of the same that the ymposicion of Wharfadge and other duties formerly accustomed to be paid shall bee agmented⁴ and encreased Not onely for and in respecte of the raysinge and accomlisheing of the Contribucion money rated and allotted uppon this porte for the expedition nowe in hand against the Turakishe Pirates,⁵ but alsoe for the more better reliefe and Comforte of poore decayed seafaring men of this City, and the necessary supporte and maintenance of the affaires and busines of the said Cominaltie, Knowe yee therefore that wee the said Master Wardens and Cominaltie of the Arte or mistery aforesaid have at our said generall Courte elected Constituted and appointed and by theis presentes Doe elect constitute and appointe Phillipp Dickenson marchant to bee our Deputie and lawfull Attorney To Collect

¹ The wharfage rates fixed in June 1620 are to be found in the *Book of Trade*. They are printed as Appendix II in H. E. Nott, *The Deposition Books of Bristol*, Vol. I (Bristol Record Society's Publications, Vol. VI). The 1620 list of duties also included the rates for anchorage, cannadge and plankage, and tonnage and poundage. Schedules of wharfage rates are also appended to the leases of wharfage rates granted by the City to the Society in 1661 and 1690.

² This seems to be the last time that the Society paid wharfage money to the City. After this, it retained it in its own hands. The *him* referred to in the extract is Robert Aldworth.

³ Note the use of Keyadge for Kannadge. The heading was, however, added at a later date. In the schedule of duties attached to this document (but not printed here), the form kannadge is used.

⁴ *Sic*.

⁵ See pp. 179-187.

gather and receyve for vs and in our names of all and euery person and persons whatsoever the Duties ymposicions and Wharfadge rated and assessed vpon all and singuler their goodes wares marchandises shippes and vessills coming vnto this Citty or Porte of Bristoll which are expressed and Declared in a schedule or Inventory thereof to theis presentes annexed¹ Wherein if any person or persons shall refuse to pay or bee disobedient wee doe hereby give full power and auctoritie to the said Phillip Dickenson to Compell euery such person or persons soe refusing by Distresse or any other lawfull meanes as shalbee most fitt and convenient.

In wittnes whereof wee have caused our Comon seale to bee herevnto affixed. Dated² at our Common Hall in Bristoll

Junii 1620

Book of Trade, p. 80

362. 17 November 1623

Alsoe certeyne Committees were appointed to bee suitors to the Mayor and Cominalty for the procureing of a lease of the wharfadge to the vse of this Company at a yeerely rent, and to take into there Consideracion the auctorithy of swearinge the Master and wardeins accordinge to the Charters of this Societie.

Book of Charters I, 95

363. REDUCTION OF WHARFAGE RATES, 1624

16 December 1624

Alsoe at a generall Courte holden the sixteenth Decembris anno 1624, yt is ordeyned by a generall Consent, that the Rates of wharfadge vpon all goodes brought into this porte since the Feast of Saint Michaell tharchangell last past and soe from thence forwardes (vntill the next assessment) shalbee reduced vnto the one halfe of what hath bine lately payde by vertue of the late ymposition,³ provided that when need shalbee, the same shalbee raised agayne as occasion shall require. *Book of Charters I, 97*

364. REFUSAL TO PAY WHARFAGE, 1625

A letter to Mr Alderman Whitson in London to prosecute a petition presented to the Lordes of his maiesties privie Counsell against John Brookes for not paienge Dueties.⁴

Woorshipful,⁵ You may please to remember that at a late

¹ See p. 166, note 1.

² Followed by *or* struck through.

³ They had been doubled in June 1620. *Book of Trade*, p. 80.

⁴ The heading is in a different hand from the copy of the letter.

⁵ *Woo* in the manuscript.

meetinge of our Societie the Company had Conferrence with John Brooke¹ concerninge money which hee then owed towards the Contribution for the late expedition against the pirattes of Argeir, when as hee promised to accompt and giue satisfaccion, Since which tyme our Clarke hath Demanded the same, but cannot receyve, for that the said John Brooke seemeth to bee willinge to allowe for the tonnage of shippinge, but not the wharfadge, vnlesse the Company will yeeld to pay for the Charge of a sute in lawe, which hee hath byn at with one of the Farmors officers of this porte whoe (as ys reported) informeth against him for some misdeavor. Wee Doubt not but you well knowe that the wharfadge hath byn anniently assessed and paid towards the Reparacions of the warfes and support of the necessary affaires of this Citty and Company, and was lately augmented for the better payment of such money as was borrowed for the payment of the said Contribucion, And therefore yf hee may haue his will therein, there will not want others to ymitate the same, Wherefore wee intreat you to informe the Lordes of his Maiesties most honourable privie Counsell of his neglect of their Lordships order for the levieinge of the same Contribucion, and to petition their honnours to bee pleased to send for the said Brooke by some speciall Messenger, to answeere his said Contempt, wherein wee pray your furtherance, and yf it shall seeme good vnto you, to vse the reasons in the petition that goeth inclosed. The Company haue agreed by full Consent to prosecute the matter, and to defray the Charge thereof, and for your paynes therein, and your many former Curtisies shewed on their behalfe, they will remaine thankefull, And we shall allwayes rest

Your loveinge Fryndes

Bristoll : this 8th
of Februarij 1624

Willm Pitt	Richard Longe
John Doughtie	Willm Jones
John Barker	John Tayler
John Gonninge	Francis Creswicke
Humfrie Hooke	Derrick Popley
Andrew Charlton	Willm Wyatt
Peter Miller	Giles Elbridge

Book of Trade, p. 159

¹ John Brooke was a cooper and shipowner engaged in foreign trade. The merchants complained that he refused to contribute to the cost of the 1620 expedition against the Turkish pirates 'Notwithstanding hee onely of this Porte had benefitt thereby, haveing a shipp then rescued from the Turkishe pirattes . . .' He was brought before the Council and promised to pay the arrears. *Book of Trade*, pp. 159-160: *Acts of the Privy Council, 1623-25*, p. 485.

365. 13 February 1625

Mr Whitsons letter to the Companie Vpon receipt of theires concerninge John Brookes obstinacy with the order to discharge Brooke from further attendance upon his submission and satisfaction to bee made

Woorshipfull and my worthie fryndes

May it please to to vnderstand that yours of the 8th of this instant came to my handes this Eveninge concerninge the obstinacy of John Brooke, for which I am verie sorrie that he will not be Drawne by any faire meanes to Conformitie. I will not fayle (god willinge) to doe my best indeavours to make him both see and knowe his errors, and yf the Lordes sitt toMorrowe, you shall (god willinge) heare very spedily from mee, but yf they sitt not tomorrowe, then I must and will (god willinge) attend the first opportunitie. Vppon Wednesday next, I hope to put a finall end to my longe tedious and Chargeable suite in the Exchequer with my mightie adversary Cushawe, but with my greate Charge and losse besides many tedious journeys to the Citty, which being ended I was purposed to haue presently Departed this Citty, but for the respects and loue I owe to that Company, whereof I am a member, I will attend to meete Mr Brooke at the Counsell table where I presume hee will bee Compelled to pay, not onely what he oweth, but alsoe the Messengers Charges etc which may bee a terror to other hereafter, yf there shalbee any of this turbulent humour. And soe with remembrance of my best wishes and kindest loue to you all, I Comend you, together with myselfe, vnto godes mercye, and will allwayes bee

Your very loveinge Frynd

London 13th February
1624

John Whitson

To the woorshipfull and my verie much respected Fryndes the Maister and Company of marchantes of the Citty of Bristoll

Book of Trade, p. 160

366. FINES FOR NON-PAYMENT OF WHARFAGE.

4 DECEMBER 1626

Alsoe it is further ordered that such persons of this Societie as shalbee greatest lader in anie shippe that shall come to this Porte or enter the goodes in his Owne name, shall within one moneth next after entrie thereof made (being Demanded by the Biddle

or Clarcke) pay in the duties or else appointe where the same shalbee receyved, vpon paine to forfait five poundes to the use of this Societie over and aboute the Duties.

Book of Charters I, 101

367. NON-PAYMENT OF DUTIES IN THE CIVIL WAR

11 November 1643

wharfage
Composition of
Grocery and
Tonnage
in arrear¹

Whereas the accustomed duties of Wharfage, Composition of Grocery,² Tonnage to the poore etc. belonging to the benefitt of this Society, are vnpaid by many of this Company and others (they takeing occasions at the distractions of the tymes to refuse the saide paymentes) It was therefore considered of, at a generall meeting of the said Society (the day and yeare above written) agreed vpon and ordered That hereafter all such dues as aforesaid shalbe paid vnto Richard Ash or the Collecto^r of the Hall duties of this Society (for the tyme being) in that Roome nere to the Custome howse where the Sherriffes Clarke attendeth to receive their duties, where the said Collecto^r will alsoe attend to receive them when any Marchantes come to enter their goodes at the Customehowse, either inwardes or outwardes ; And therefore wee doe all and euery one of vs hereby promise to pay the said duties as aforesaid without any delay or excuse whatsoever according to the quantity of goodes entered in the Customehouse.

There follow thirty-eight signatures.

Hall Book I, 61

368. INCREASE IN WHARFAGE RATES

20 May 1645

Repairs of the³
keys River etc
Wharfage to be
doubled

whereas⁴ the Hall is much indebted and have many other ingagementes vpon them, as the chardge of the River, repairing of the Keys and the like, which they are not able at presente to dischargd and vndergoe, It is therefore ordered and agreed by the said Society, that the Wharfage paid by this society shalbe from henceforth forwardes (vntill the said ingagementes be cleared) payed double,⁵ And that all others tradeing to and in this Citty shall pay the like double Wharfage.

¹ Marginal note in different hand from the extract.

² The merchants had compounded for the payment of purveyance on wine and grocery.

³ The marginal notes are in a different hand from the extract.

⁴ Preceded by *And struck through*.

⁵ They were reduced by one quarter on 11 December 1648 (*Hall Book I, 133*). They were doubled on 11 April 1661 (*Ibid. 328*), and reduced to single rates on 25 December 1664 (*Ibid. 359*).

It is further ordere and agreed, That the Owners of all shippes and vessells, aswell belonging to this Citty as to any other place which shall from henceforth arive in this porte from Forraigne partes, shall pay foure pence per tonne, for Tonnadge of euery Tonne which the said shippes or vessells shalbe esteemed to be in burthen.

Hall Book I, 73

**369. WHARFAGE OUTWARDS TO BE COLLECTED FROM
THOSE NOT FREE OF THE SOCIETY**

12 February 1667

It is alsoe at this Courte voted, ordered and decreed That all persons not free of this society shall pay wharfage for all goods outwards as inwards. And that Mr Euzebius Brookeꝰ haue a Deputation to collect the same. And that all Barques belonging to the Southcoast to the southward of Barnestable, And all Barques comeing from the northward of Tinby, shall pay the like Wharfage aswell inwards and outwards according to former orders therefore made and ordeyned.

Hall Book I, 403

370. 11 November 1667

Alsoe it is ordered, That Mr Brookes his Deputacion shalbe altered only to collect those dueties hee is appoynted to receive from strangers only vntill the 25th Day of March next. And after that tyme all those free of this Citty and not free of this Society shall pay Wharfage outwards.

Hall Book I, 417

371. NEW LEASE OF WHARFAGE

10 November 1689

In this yeere¹ the Hall tooke a lease (in reuercion) of the present lease of the duties of wharfage etc and of ground for building of an additionall key Crane etc And of the reuercion of some houses to be pulled downe to widen the said key. . . .²

The said key was begun to be built and one Crane was erected pursueant to the same new lease

Book of Charters I, 229

¹ I.e. the year 10 November 1689—10 November 1690. The lease was taken in 1690.

² The lease was signed in 1690 on surrender of the lease of 1661. See p. 136.

372. COLLECTOR OF DUTIES

22 June 1691

Then voted and ordered that Mr Thomas Moore be (on his petition now exhibited) admitted in the roomth of Mr Eusebius Brooke deceased our receaver of the duties of wharfage anchorage etc he rendring an account from the 24th instant as said Brooke did For which he shalbe allowed after the rate of 6¹¹ per Centum for what he shall receive for this Hall by vertue of his office.

Hall Book II, 472

373. 17 January 1696

to attend maior etc. pro encrease of duties of wharfage voted that the master, the wardens and Mr Mason doe attend Mr maior for obteyning an encrease of the duties of wharfage etc.

Hall Book III, 62

374. 15 June 1699

to consult
councell how
to charge the
coasters etc

And then alsoe that the said Committee doe without loss of time consult Councell or take such methods as they shall thinke fitt to charge all coasting goods that shalbe brought from London or other parts with payment of wharfage at the time of the landing upon the back or key (all markett boates and vessells bringing provision or timber¹ for the service of the Citty to be excepted.

Hall Book III, 146

SPECIMEN PAGES FROM THE WHARFAGE BOOKS

375. Wharfage Inwards

May 1654 Ann Accompt of monies Collected for Wharfage from the 4th of May 1654 untill the 9th of Nouember Followinge

W.H. 4th		l	s	d
R.L.	In the Goulden Lyon from Lisboane Robert Cann			
	16 pipes of oyle and 8 Chests of suger	000	14	00
	Gabrill Deane 5 pipes of oyle	000	01	00
	William Merricke 1 fetch ² of suger	000	00	04
	Joseph Clearke 100 pipes of oyles 2 cwt sinnamon	000	06	06
	Christopher Griffeth 12 chests of suger	000	7	00
	Samuel Herne 66 pipes of oyle 16 Chests of suger			
	and 2 C 2 q ^r of sinamon	002	05	02
	Richard Higgens 1 fetch of suger	000	00	04
	James Croafts 6 hhds ³ of oyle	000	01	09

¹ Followed by *and other goods necessarie* struck through.

² A bundle, a quantity that can be carried.

³ Hogsheads. A hogshead was sixty-three gallons.

Abraham Blackborne 3 pipes of oyle	000 01 09
Francis Vickars 6 pipes 3 hhds of oyle 1 fetch of sug ^r	000 04 09
Joseph Jackson 12 pipes 18 hhds of oyle and 3 chests sug ^r	000 14 00
Charles Jones 2 pipes of oyle	000 01 02
In the Mary of Rose from Nauntz	
William Yeamans 25 Tonns of salte	000 07 03½
9 Tonns ½ of vinegar	000 03 11½
22 hhds of prunes Cont 62 C waight	000 02 03
10 Bale of paper	000 02 06
4 Balletts ¹ of Canvas	000 00 08
In the King Daued from Norway	
Joseph Jackson 4000 deale boardes	000 10 00
15 mastes	000 01 00
In the Goulden Lyon from Lisboane aforesaid	
Robert Tyson 2 pipe of oyle	000 01 02
John Bence 13 pipes of oyle	000 07 07
Tho Speede 1 Chest 1 fetch of suger	000 00 11
	006 17 00

376. Aprill 1658

Wharfage Book 1654-59, p. 1

In the Dilligence from Barbados	
Edw Lander 8 hhds and 1 butt of suger	0000 01 08
In the Agreement from Virginia	
Lewis Reade 56 hhds of tobaco	0000 09 04
In the Dolphin from Madera	
James Eston 21 hhds 6 pipes of wine	0000 05 06
In the Lynn Merchant from Fraunce	
James Powell 504 quarter of Rye	0002 02 00
In the Greyhound from Mercillia ²	
Edw Mica and Thomas Gookin 2 tonns ½ pt of oyle	0000 02 06
In the Recoury from Virginia	
George Lane 8 hhds of tobaco	0000 01 04
In the Seaflower from Barbados	
Mary Horth mds 2 butts of suger	0000 00 08
In the Blessing from Cales a Lisboane	
Thomas Speede 10 hhds of oyle	0000 02 11
3 Chests of muscavadoes ³ suger	0000 01 00

¹ Ballot. A small bundle of 70 to 120 lb.² Marseilles.³ Muscovado. Raw or unrefined sugar obtained from the juice of sugar-cane by evaporation and draining off the molasses.

1 Chest of white suger	0000 00 07
In the Sea Flower from Barbadoes	
William Crabb 30 Cask of suger	0000 07 06
In the Paperball from Amsterdam	
Rich Streamer 450 quarters of Rye	0001 17 06
In the Seaflower from Barbadoes	
Wm Cole 8 hhds of suger	0000 01 04
In the Philip and Mary from Barbadoes	
Edw Feilding 26 hhds of suger	0000 04 04
John Benell 2 hhds and 2 punchions suger	0000 00 10
Geo Browne 3 hhds suger	0000 00 06
1 butt 1 Chest and 30 small Rolls tobacco	0000 02 00
In the Robt from Virginia	
James Groues 15 hhds tobacco	0000 02 06
In the Samaritan from Norway	
James North 8 Last and half of tarr	0000 02 06
Two hundred deale boards	0000 00 06
Roger Richards In the Susan 14 pipes of spirrits	0000 04 08
	<hr/>
	006 11 08

Wharfage Book 1654-59, p. 179

WHARFAGE OUTWARDS¹

377. 24 Ann Accompt of monys collected for wharfage Outwardes from the 29th Septembr 1683 vntill the 25th of Decembr nxt Following

October 1683

1 Jonothan Stone In the Industry for Virginia	
1 barrell of goods	00 00 01
Richd Walker 1 barl goods	00 00 01
James Hollidge In the John 12 hhds 2 barrells of goods	00 02 02
John Blanch In the Katherine 3 hhds of goods	00 00 06
Richd Benson 5 hhds of goodes	00 00 10
John Williamson In Angell Gabrell 4 hhds of goods	00 00 08
Thomas Jeffris In the Thomas and Ann 10 hhds of goods	00 01 08
Tho Dudleston 1 barl goods	00 00 01
David White 1 barl goods	00 00 01

¹ The records of wharfage outwards are not nearly so informative as those of wharfage inwards. They do not give details of the commodities exported, and the destination of the ships is given only sporadically.

	James Freman 1 hhd 1 barl goods	00 00 03
	Abrah Elton 7 hhds goods	00 01 02
2 ^d	Thomas Pope In the Industrye 9 hhds of goods	00 01 06
	Tim ^o Davis 2 hhds goods	00 00 04
	John Vine In the Agreement 9 hhds of goods	00 01 06
	Will Lewis 4 hhds goods	00 00 08
	John Fremen 1 hhd goods	00 00 02
	Andrew Limbry In the Abraham and Mary 6 hhds of goods	00 01 00
3 ^d	Symon White In the Success 4 hhd goods	00 00 08
	Abrah Elton 8 hhds goods	00 01 04
	Thomas Gouldsmith In Agreement 12 hhds of goods	00 02 00
	John Price 2 hhd goods	00 00 04
	Tho Bradly 3 hhds goods	00 00 06
	Edw Croafts 3 hhds goods	00 00 06
	Tho Gouldny 17 hhds goods	00 02 10
	John Templeman 3 hhds goods	00 00 06
4 th	George Masson In the James 13 hhds of goods	00 02 02
		<hr/>
		01 03 07

Wharfage Book 1683-84, p. 24

X. PIRATES, TURKISH CORSAIRS, AND CONVOYS

The members of the Society naturally had a considerable interest in the safety of the ships that carried their goods, and a number of them were ship-owners as well as merchants.¹ Apart from the ordinary dangers of the sea, their ships had to face the perils from English and Irish pirates, from Turkish corsairs and from enemy privateers in time of war. The nature and extent of these dangers varied from time to time. In the first part of the century, pirates and Turkish corsairs were particularly menacing. In the Civil War, the merchants suffered at the hands of both parties, and in the wars with the Dutch and the French in the second half of the century, they were very much concerned with the question of convoys.

Documents nos. 378-386, 397, illustrate the part played by the Society against English and Irish pirates. Documents nos. 387-396 are a selection from a considerable volume of papers produced in connexion with a national expedition against the Turkish corsairs. It was originally planned in 1617, but for various reasons was delayed until 1621. Bristol was required to contribute £2,500 towards the cost, and the handling of the contribution was entrusted to the Society. The merchants put up a tremendous, and ultimately successful, fight to get the amount reduced to £1,000, and the Society recovered its contribution by doubling the wharfage rates. The remaining documents are further illustrations of the problems arising in connexion with merchant shipping. No. 397 shows the merchants anxiously advising Sir Thomas Button to secure a more adequate force to deal with pirates in the Severn and off the Irish coast. On the other hand, they showed a certain lack of enthusiasm for a plan of joint action against the Turks put forward by certain western ports in 1633 (nos. 399-400). In the disturbed days of the Civil War and Interregnum losses were heavy and there was considerable interest in convoys. The second and third Dutch Wars left their mark on the merchants' records; and in the years after the Revolution there was a renewed concern about convoys and also about embargoes which the government placed from time to time on the sailing of English ships (nos. 401-414).

¹ P. V. McGrath, 'The Merchant Venturers and Bristol Shipping in the Early Seventeenth Century', *Mariner's Mirror*, vol. 36, no. 1, January 1950.

378. 8 October 1611

Alsoe this yeere,¹ there were certeyne Pirates in the Channell, whome the marchantes of Barnestable Did endeavour to expell, to the Contribucion of whose charges therein, was paie out of the generall stocke of this society the somme of three poundes iij¹¹

Book of Charters I, 45

379. 1611-12

more paie to a footeman that brought letters from the Maio^r of Barnestable concerninge Pirates that had taken a barke of that Porte at Lunday² 000 10 00

... more for ij¹¹ x^s paie to Justinian Westcombe of Barnestable towards the setting forth of a pinnace there fitted against Pirates 002 10 00

Book of Trade : General Account 1610-11

380. 10 October 1612

Alsoe this yeere,³ were diuers Pirates in the Channell of Seaverne, For whose suppressinge, there were twoe shippes of warre. viz. the Concord and the True Love ymployed and Furnished by the Societie of Marchantes adventurers of this Citty, the Charge whereof amounted to the somme of Clxxij¹¹

Book of Charters I, 47

381. 14 October 1613

Alsoe this yeere⁴ were Diuers Pirates in the Channell of Seaverne For whose suppression, there were Foure shippes of Warre viz the Amitie, the James, the Mathewe, and the White Angell, sett forth and appointed, the whole Charges whereof amounted to lllxx¹¹ js xid

Book of Charters I, 49

382. 1613-14

more paid for the Charges of ij or iij saylers that was sent to Exceto^r by Mr Barker and others to give evidence against the Pirates that was taken by the Concord and True Love 004 00 00 paid Mr Alderman Haviland, Mr Barker, Mr Gunning, Mr Tomlinson and Mr Long all such money with the vse thereof⁵ as

¹ I.e. the year following 8 October 1611.

² Lundy Island.

³ I.e. in the year following the General Court of 10 October 1612. The expedition actually took place in 1613.

⁴ I.e. the year following the General Court of 14 October 1613. The four ships were sent out in 1614.

⁵ With the interest on the loans.

was lent by them the 20th of July 1613 in setting forth the Concord and True Love of Bristoll to suppress Pirates viz to Mr Haviland xxv¹¹ which hee lent and the vse thereof 026 00 00

more paid Mr Barker l¹¹ which hee lent and the vse thereof

052 16 09

more paid Mr Gonning xxv¹¹ which hee lent and the vse thereof 025 18 00

more paid Mr Tomlinson xxv¹¹ which hee lent and the vse thereof xxvj¹¹ and to Mr Longe xxv¹¹ which hee lent and the vse thereof xxvj¹¹ xj^s 052 11 00

paid Mr Alderman Aldworth for assuring 150¹¹ in the Concord 004 10 00

more paid Mr Barker x¹¹ in parte of a more some by him disbursed in the setting out of the Concord and True Love and to Mr Aldworth viij¹¹ in parte of a more some in setting out the White Angell against the pirates and more to Alderman Whitson ix¹¹ xiiij^s iiij^d for the charges hee disbursed aboute the French Company¹ 23 13 04

Book of Trade : General Account 1613-14

383. 5 July 1614²

Invocatio domus Consilij v^{to} die Julij Anno Regni Regis Jacobi etc duodecimo. 1614.

It ys this Daye agreed That whereas there are three shippes sette fourthe of this Porte of Bristoll for the takinge and surprisinge of Pyrates which Robbe and spoyle dyvers of the kinges Maiesties Subiettes on the Ryver of Severne, the Chardge of which settinge fourthe may amounte to the somme of Twoe hundred poundes in money or thereaboutes, whereof the Towne of Barnestable have promise to paye one Quarter parte, It ys now agreed that the reste of the same Chardge which may amounte to the somme of Cl.¹¹ or thereaboutes, shalbe borne and Disbursed as followeth (that ys to saye the one halfe thereof beinge lxxv¹¹ or thereaboutes shalbe borne by the Cytie and Chamber of Bristoll and the other lxxv¹¹ or thereaboutes shalbe borne and Disbursed by the Company of Marchantes of this Cytie of Bristoll. And yf any Benefitts be gotten by takinge of any such Pyrates, It shalbe³ Devyded one quarter parte thereof to the Towne of Barnestable,

¹ See p. 207 ff.

² Followed by a deletion.

³ Followed by *equallye* struck through.

and the reste to be equallye Devyded bytwene the sayd Cytie and the marchanntes of Bristoll, söl. p' libr'.

C.C.P., 1608-1627, fo. 46¹

384. 31 October 1614

Alsoe this yeere was disbursed for the present and enterteynment bestowed vppon Sir Thomas Button² Knighte Captaine of his Maiesties shippe the Phenixe Whoe is appointed to Cleere the Channell of Seaverne of Pirates the somme of xxj¹¹ jx^s jx^d

Book of Charters I, 51

385. 6 November 1615

This yeere there was disbursed out of the generall stocke of this Societie towards the expences and charges of Mr Barkers servant at London beinge ymployed there aboute the marchantes business, and alsoe was paide for a piece of ordinance and other things which were loste by the shippe of warr lately sett forth to suppress pirates in this Channell and was likewise paide for the rest of beere for the furnisheinge of the same shippes as by the particulers thereof in the generall account of William Fleete endinge at Michaelmas anno 1616. the somme of xxxij¹¹ xiijs^s iiij^d

Book of Charters I, 53

386. 1617-18

more xiiij¹¹ payd Mr John Barker master³ of the said Company September 19th 1618 and is for a presante bestowed on Sir Thomas Button

014 00 00

Treasurer's Book I, 4

387. 17 November 1618⁴

In this yeare in February anno 1618 there were letters addressed from the Lordes of his maiesties honorable privie Counsell to the Maior of this Citty for a contribucion to bee made for the raisinge of two thousand five hundred poundes allotted on the marchantes and Owners of this porte towards the expedition against Turkishe

¹ A copy of a royal warrant, dated 30 July 11 James I, to the Mayor and Aldermen authorizing them to send ships against the pirates, is found in the *Book of Trade*, p. 49.

² Button had been in command of an expedition to search for the North-West Passage. He took part in the 1621 expedition against the Turkish pirates. He was Admiral of the king's ships on the coast of Ireland from about 1613 till his death in 1634.

³ *mr* in the manuscript, standing for master or maister.

⁴ The date of the General Court. The events described took place in 1619.

Pirates,¹ And therevpon the said marchantes and owners assembled and after much Debateinge of the matter in question, it was agreed by the whole Societie at a Generall Courte, and afterwarde certified to the saide Lordes that the saide marchantes and owners of this Porte would furnishe 1000^l towards the said service, being as much in proporcion of trade as London or anie other the western portes of this Kingdome were allotted to pay, Wherevpon the Lordes addressed other letters requireinge the Maior to Levy the whole somme or else to appeare with ij Aldermen his bretherne before theire Lorshipps to shewe cause to the Contrary, By which meanes Mr John Guy Mayor, Mr John Whitsone alderman and Mr John Barker Master of the Company with Mr Nicholas Meredith Chamberlaine and their attendantes were enforced to travell to London and did carrie the money which they yelded to contribute with them, and answered the Lordes to the full, and therevpon and in regard that the service did not then proceed they were discharged of any further attendance at the present and returned With the money, the charge of which Journey amounted to

xlj^l viij^s jd

Book of Charters I, 85

389.² 13 December 1619

In this yeare in December 1619 the Lordes of his maiesties most honourable privie Counsell renewed the matter concerninge the contribucion money, and addressed theire letters to the Maior for the raisinge of the whole money allotted vpon the marchantes and owners of this porte towards the expedition against Turkish pirates and therevppon Mr Alderman Guy late Mayor and Mr John Gonning Master of this Company were intreated to take theire Journey to London, and accordingly they did appeare before the saide Lordes and petitioned that the 1000^l which they yelded to contribute mighte bee accepted and that the marchantes and owners of this porte mighte bee discharged of the residue, and gave

¹ This document and the next give a general picture of the reactions of the Bristol merchants to the demand for a contribution towards the expedition. Nos. 390-396, are selected from a considerable number of references in the Society's records. See *Book of Trade*, pp. 56, 58-63, 65, 69, 70-75, 87-89, 113; *Book of Charters I*, 85, 87. A number of these are letters received from or written to the Privy Council. The State Paper contain many references to the expedition and to the reactions of other towns and other groups of merchants as well as those of Bristol. A very interesting list of ships lost since 1610, which the merchants produced as part of their case for a reduction of their contribution, is found in the *Book of Trade*, p. 78. This was printed as an appendix to P. V. McGrath, 'The Merchant Venturers and Bristol Shipping in the Early Seventeenth Century', *Mariner's Mirror*, vol. 36, no. 1.

² No. 388 has been omitted.

attendance for a favourable answer, but obteyned little comfort, onely they were appointed to pay the money that they had then brought with them into the exchequer and soe returned, the charges of which Journey amounted to the somme of xl¹¹ viij^s vj^d

Alsoe this yeere in June 1620 the Lordes of his maiesties privie Counsell addressed other letters to the Maior for the residue of the contribucion money and required him to levy the whole some where upon Mr Alderman Whitsone and Mr John Goninge were entreated to take their journey to London and to sollicite the Lordes by humble petition for a favourable Decree on the behalfe of the Societie, Whereby they might bee freed from the payment of the residue of the money, and accordingly the saide Mr Whitson and Mr Goninge proceeded and attended their Lordships¹ pleasure in that behalfe, and were dismissed of further attendance at that present, but obteyned noe absolute discharge for the rest of the money, and soe returned, the charges of which journey amounted to xxxvij¹¹

Alsoe this yeare in the moneths of January and June the money which the Company yelded to Contribute beinge one thousand poundes was paid by Mr Thomas Wright treasurer.

Book of Charters I, 87

390. The Company of Marchauntes and owners their resolution and answer to the Major of Bristoll what they are willing to Contribute towards the said service.²

To the Right³ worshopful John Guy Mayor of the Citty of Bristoll.

May it please your worshop⁴ to vnderstand that according to your order and Commandement, Wee the Company of marchantes and owners of shipping of this Porte of Bristoll have assembled ourselves, and (haveing considered the ymportance of the letters to you directed from the Righte honourable the Lordes of his Maiesties moste honorable privie Counsell) doe readily assent (to Contribute towards his Maiesties noble and worthie enterprize, in suppressing those common enimies of humane Societie the

¹ Loppes in the manuscript. The abbreviation can be extended in more than one way.

² The original, dated 24 February, 1619, was forwarded by the Mayor to the Council with a covering letter, 28 February, 1619. See *Cal. S.P.D.* 1619-1623, p. 19. This heading is in a different hand from the copy of the letter.

³ Followed by *Joh* struck through.

⁴ Woorthy, worshopful, or some similar word.

Turkishe Pirates) even beyond our abilitie (considering the meanness and restraunte of our trade, and the manifold losses which wee have lately susteyned, and even within this sixe moneths last past have lost by Piracie and Shipwracke Five shippes of good burthen full freighted with goodes) Notwithstanding wee are willing and Content to supplie and furnishe the some of Sixe hundred poundes towardes the said service to bee paid in twoe yeeres whereof three hundred poundes shall bee paid by the first of Aprill next and thother three hundred poundes by the first of Aprill 1620, which some wee hope wilbee accepted of by their honnours. And wee suppose that if other Portes of this kingdome Doe Contribute according to our proporcion the service may bee effectually performed, For the good successe whereof Wee humbly pray to Allmightie god, And doe Remayne

Your woorships in all Due obervance

Book of Trade, p. 60

391. A collection of some reasons that may be alleadged to shew that *p. 63*
1000¹¹ contribution for Bristoll is as good proporcion and as much as 40000¹¹ for London¹

1 The answer of Mr Farmer Mayo^r of Bristoll to the Lordes Letter is to bee found out.²

2 The certeyntie of the tonnadge and poundage receyved in London and in Bristoll wilbee a good ground to argue vppon

3 Yf our allottment shall thereby rise to³ highe,⁴ it may be brought lower vppon this Consideracion followeing viz that three merchantes of London doe deale for more, and in more gainefull trades, then all Bristoll marchantes being aboute threescore out of whose very doubtfull trades threescore families bee mainteyned; the Remayne will afford but a small Contribution out of their bare and slender meanes whereas in London three families onely being mainteyned out of the Superfluitie of their grate meanes, yt is little to them to contribute Francklie

4 The securitie of the trade is to more ymportance to London then to all England not onely by reason of the quantety of their

¹ There is an abstract of this document in J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, p. 125, but it is worth printing in full. It is not dated, but was probably drawn up in March or April 1619.

² Thomas Farmer was Mayor in 1616-17 when the demand for a contribution was first made.

³ *Sic.*

⁴ I.e. if a comparison of customs receipts showed that Bristol was not unfairly assessed.

adventures, but for the qualitie of one very greate gaine, which they have out of all the trade of England besides, which is the matter of assurance whereof they have almost the sole possession of

5 That the trade which marchantes of Ireland, Barnestable and the West Country have in Bristol ys a good parte of the trade of Bristoll

6 That the Owners of Shipping in Bristoll are very fewe and poore, the Navigacion being employed by Scottishe and Flemishe shippes

7 That the trade of wyne being one of the greetest trades this Citty hath ys nowe much ympouerished for that out of Portes in Wales ymport free most of their Customers for wyne are served at a lower rate then could bee by Bristoll marchantes affoorded, Soe that this yeere the *merchants* of Bristoll will loose by Gascoigne wyne aboute 1000^l, and the said trade will decay yf remedie bee not provided

8 That this Porte hath heretofore according to their dutie and soe must and wilbee allwayes ready to doe the kinges Maiesties service for any affaires in Ireland for which service it lyeth more fitt and proper then any of the out Portes in these westerne partes, and seeing they are to serve therein when the rest are free, they humbly Crave to have the more favor

9 That this Citty is poore and soe insensible of any proporcion with London that twoe or three marchantes of London are able to buy all the Inhabitanes of Bristoll out of all their meanes in the world saving their persons; there are about 700 widowes heere.

10 That what must necessarily bee laide vpon Bristoll may bee laide vpon the whole Inhabitanes and not putt vpon the marchantes and Owners onely according to the Lordes letteres to Mr Farmer Mayo^r and that accordingly effectual letteres bee procured for the assessing of them and binding them (to appeare before the Lordes) that will not contribute accordingly. p. 64

11 The money lent by this Citty vpon privie seales¹ may be considred of

12 The Charges that this Citty hath bine att to suppress the Pirates in this our Channell may bee remembred

13 That the Maio^r cannott in person conveniently repaire to the Lordes, for the kinges Maiesties service inherent to his place as the mustering of the Trayned souldiers, the keeping of the

¹ Loans to the Crown made on the security of the privy seal.

quarter Sessions, as alsoe for his weake and very doubfull estate of health.

The losse which the marchantes of Bristoll susteyned in enter-
teyning his Maiestie at Woodstocke in anno 1605 and enterteyning
the queenes Maiestie twice at Bathe in anno 1613 which amounteth
to¹

14. That the 1000¹¹ assented vnto wilbee with much difficultie
collected

Collection of the Customes of Subsidie as they are receyved
yeerely in the Portes mencioned in the margent

Portes	1613	1614	1615	Medium
Exceter	4086	3703	3716	3836
Bristoll	2945	3519	3885	3449
Weymouth	1903	2151	1882	1978
Lyme		3031	2780	2905
London				125000

Book of Trade, pp. 63, 64

392. 10 April 1619²

Sir,

the contribucion was not laid according to the custome paid
by ainy company, or in ainy Porte for then the Marchant Adven-
turers³ should have paid a farr greater, and diverse other Com-
panies alsoe, But consideracion was rather had, that those portes
should pay most which had the ampliast trade into the Levant
Seas, the place of greatest danger; amongst which Bristow is
the principall and farr above any other port (London excepted)
which wee conceive was a sufficient reason to induce the imposing
of that somme, though wee doe not make ourselves the sole agents
of that buisines and wee rest at Your Comaund

Custome howse London

Jo. Wolstenholme

the xth of April 1619.

Nic^o Salter

To the right worshippingfull their verry loving freind Sir Clement
Edmunds Knight⁴

Endorsed Lettere from Sir John Woolstenholme and Sir Nich :
Salter Concerninge the Assessmentes upon the Outportes

To the right worshippingfull their very loving freind Sir Clement
Edmundes Knight

P.R.O., S.P. 14/108 no. 32

¹ The amount is not filled in. The reference is to purveyance.

² Presumably this information in this letter was used by the govern-
ment to answer Bristol's objection that she had been unfairly assessed.

³ Presumably the Merchant Adventurers of England, not the Bristol
Society.

⁴ Clerk to the Council.

393. *March 1620*¹

To the righte *woorshipfull* Thomas Packer Major of the Cittie of Bristoll

It maie please your *woorship* to bee aduertized, that accordinge to our duetie, Wee have imployed our uttermoste endeavours to raise the entire somme required of vs by the Righte *honourable* Lordes and others of his maiesties most honnorable privie Counsell for the suppressinge of the Turkish Pirates. But in regard of the povertie of the marchantes and Owners of this Porte, occasioned by the restraunte and meanenes of our trade, together with the manifold losses which we haue lately susteyned both by shipwracke and depredacion of Pirates, wee are soe vnable to contribute the whole, that wee cannot possiblief leavie the five hundred poundes alreadie paide for this yeares contribucion without extraordinary pressure of some men, whoe haue alsoe within theis seaven yeares disbursed out of their particular estates at least five hundred poundes towards the suppressing of Englishe and Irishe Pirates which infested this Channell. As for the Owners in this Porte they are soe fewe and poore in regard of the frequent resorte of Scotishe shippes hither, that they are not able to supplie the twentieth parte of that somme which is nowe tendered: Soe that the contribucion beinge restrayned vnto the marchantes onely, it will fall upon a verie fewe, whoe are most willing and readie to furnishe towards this worthie and noble expedicion to the full of theire Commerce and abilitie compareinge the same with the proportion of London, or anie other Westernne portes of the Kingdome. The premisses considered Wee humblie praie you to recommend our estate to the favourable Consideracion of the Righte honourable Lordes of his Maiesties privie Counsell for the acceptance of that somme, which wee doe most willingly and cheerefully tender unto theire honnours, and which is alreadie paide into his maiesties Exchequor, And soe praieng to Almightye god for the good successe of the saide affaires Wee humblie take our leave and doe remaine

Your *Woorships* in all due observannce

Thomas Wright

Peter Miller

Wi: Jones

Miles Jackson

William Pitt

Thomas Colston

¹ The letter is not dated, but it was forwarded to the Council with a covering letter by the Mayor Thomas Packer on 13 March, 1620. *Cal. S.P.D.* 1619-23, p. 130; *Book of Trade*, p. 72.

John Tailer
 John Griffithe
 John Barker
 Wm Pitt
 John Langton
 Humph: Hooke
 Jn^o Tomlinson
 Andrew Charlton
 Rich Longe
 Walter Ellis

Francis Creswicke
 Jn^o Gonning
 John Whitson
 Robert Aldworth
 John Guy
 Humphry Browne
 Richard Holworthy
 Arthur Hibbins
 Alexander James

P.R.O., S.P./14/113 no. 23(1)

394. 1619-20

more CCCC¹¹ receyved of the Chamberline of Bristoll
 by way of loane towards the setting forth of shippes
 against the Turkes whereof 200¹¹ receyved in January
 1619 and 200¹¹ in June 1620

400 00 00

more CCCcxv¹¹ receyved of divers marchantes and
 owners of shippinge of this porte by way of loane
 towards the said service as by the perticulers in folio
 132 of this booke may appeare

425 00 00

Treasurer's Book I, 5v

395. 23 April 1621.

The Companies letter to the Burgesses concerning the disposing of 500¹¹ the contribucon money which lay in the hands of Mr Ellis Crispe at London¹

After our hartie Commendacions etc. Whereas in the moneth of June last, there was left in the handes of Mr Ellis Crispe the some of Five hundred poundes of the money which was provided for the Expedition against Pirates, And for asmuch as the same doth yet there remaine in suspence, it being thoughte fitt by you Mr Alderman Whitson that wee should not bee too forwardes to pay it in, before wee shalbee required, and yet Neuerthesse to have it allwaies in readines, Wee doe therefore intreate you (with the assistance of Mr John Doughtie Maio^r of Bristoll) to take some Course for lending the said mony at sixe or what els in the hundred you shall thincke fitt vpon good securitie, soe as the same may bee surely repaide at tenn dayes Warning, and soe to take bond in the name of John Langton and Humfry Browne of the City

¹ The heading is in a different hand from the copy of the letter.

of Bristoll marchantes, which bond you may either leave with Mr Thomas Langton of London or send downe at your pleasure. .¹

23 April 1621

Book of Trade, p. 87

396. 1620-21

more paide to Richard Griffith the 22th December 1621 to bee paide to² such of the Company that owe wharfadge for the one halfe of money by them lent towards the expedition against the Pirates for the eveninge of such accomptes 0026 01 00

Treasurer's Book I, 7

397. A letter to Sir Thomas Button³ *Captain* of his maiesties shippe the Phenix for the supply of men for the better Defence of the Coaste.

Sir

wee vnderstand that your selfe in the Phenix are appointed to pursue a Pirate which hath latelie surprized a shipp on the Coast of Cornewall laden with Tyn and other Comodities, In which service wee wishe you all happie successe as heretofore you have found in accions of the like nature. For the better accomplishment whereof, and for the future good service of the shipp on the Coast of Ireland and River of Seaverne Wee doe advize and pray you to move his Maiesties Commissioners for the Navy Royall that the Phenix her proporcion of men being threescore may bee augmented For wee knowe that the shipp hath incurred imminent danger within these twoe yeeres for want of men, the Coast of Ireland and Channell of Seaverne being very dangerous in the winter tyme; withall wee have heard that some Pirates have lately Contempned the strength of your shipp; the Premisses considered Wee doubt not but that the Comissioners will in their wisdomes prevent such inconveniences that soe we may contynue quiett and free from the spoyles and depredacion of Pirates, as by meanes of the Phenix her service wee have done theis five yeeres last past Uppon the Coste of Ireland and Channell of Seauerne For which Wee prayse god and doe most thanckfully acknowledge his Maiesties favour and the Carefull endeavours

¹ The rest of the letter is concerned with the patents for the export of butter and calf-skins and the renewal of the Charter. In reply to this letter, John Guy urged that the money should be paid in at once as no one else was behindhand a penny (*Book of Trade*, pp. 88-89).

² Followed by *to* struck through.

³ For the Society's letter to the Council certifying the good work of Button and refuting charges brought against him and his crew, see *Book of Trade*, p. 66.

of his instrumentes particularly your selfe vnto whome wee
recommend our respectfull salutations and doe Remaine

Your Loveinge Frendes

Willm Young Mayo^r

John Whitson
Robte Aldworth
John Doughtie
Mr Sheriffe James
John Barker
John Langton
Humfry Hooke
Thomas Wrighte

Andrew Charlton
Richard Holworthie
Richard Long
John Locke
Francis Creswicke
Alexander James
Derricke Popley

Bristol this 25th of Aprill anno 1623

To the Righte Wo^rshipfull Sir Thomas Button Knighte Captain
of his Maiesties shipp the Phenix these give.

Book of Trade, p. 139

398. 1624-25

Inprimis for x^{li} paide to Mr William Fitzherbert for
a nagge given to the Turke¹ at his beinge here oio oo oo

Treasurer's Book I, 11

399. 28 February 1633

The Governo^r of the marchantes of Exceter and others their
letter and Articles agreed vpon to petition his maiestie for some
speedy course to bee taken to suppress turkishe pirates

Right Wo^rshipfull²

Wee vnderstand that the marchantes of your Cittie haue beene
alreadie made acquainted with the intentions of those of this
Cittie and other westerne portes touching seuerall petitions to
bee preferred vnto his Maiestie and the lordes of his Maiesties most
honourable priuie counsell for some speedie course to bee taken
for the suppressing of the Turkes, In which busines wee presume
of your readines, and therefore haue sent you herein enclosed
coppie of our agreement here at our generall meeting vnto which
wee hope you will condiscend, and will send your deputies accord-
inglie, And this desiring you to signifie vnto Mr Mayor of this

¹ For an account of the visit of this Turkish envoy to Bristol in 1625, see
Adams's *Chronicle of Bristol*, p. 214.

² Wo^{ru}. The abbreviation can be extended in a number of ways.

Cittie speedilie what your marchantes will resolute to doe in this
business wee Reste

Your loueing Friendes

Exon the last of februarie
1632

Roger Mallecke governo^r
Exon

To the Right *Worshipfull* the
Mayor of Bristoll giue these

John Clement of Plimouth

Book of Trade, p. 212

The Articles

The last Day of Februarie 1632

1. At a generall Court of the Deputies for the Cittie of Exon, and Townes of Plimouth Barnestable Dartmouth and Weymouth Milcomb Regis It is agreed and though fitt that for the suppressing of the Turkes of Argier and Tunnis A petition shalbee preferred speedilie in the name of those and other Citties and Townes vppon the sea coast vnto his Maiestie, and the lordes of his Maiesties most honourable priuie Counsell thereby to manifest their greivance in that behalfe And to petition his Maiestie and other their *lordships* that such speedie course may bee taken, as to¹ his Maiestie and their *lordships* shall seeme most convenient aswell for redresse in that behalfe as for redeeming of the captiues from them, and that for the doeing thereof one of each Cittie and towne may bee speedilie sent vnto London

2. That such Deputies as shalbee sent from each Cittie and Towne conclude of nothing which shalbee proposed by the state vntill they haue acquainted their Citties and townes with the proposition, and shall haue power from their Citties and Townes to conclude

3. That each Deputie may bee in London for this purpose the 16th of March next

4. That a letter bee written from the Deputies here assembled unto the City of Bristoll and the towne of Southampton thereby to intimate what is here concluded, and to entreate the marchantes of that Cittie and Towne to send a deputie or twoe vnto London to ioyne with them in that business

5. That the towne of Totnes Poole and Lime Regis shall according to the purport of their letters depute the rest of the Deputies or some of them to the end that the complaint may appeare to bee generall

6. That the Deputies which shalbee sent may not Depart from

¹ Followed by *their* struck through.

London in following this busines vntill they shall receiue order from their Citties and Townes in that behalfe

Roger Mallecke governo^r
 John Clement Plimouth
 John Delbridge Barnstable
 John Crewkern for Dartmouth
 Francis Gape Wymouth Melcomb' Regis

Book of Trade, p. 213

400. The Companies answere to the lettere page 212 vnto the Deputies of the westernne portes at London howe they are affected to the same employment.

Worshipfull

You may please to take notice that vppon Receipt of your letter with the Articles agreed vppon by the Deputies of the westernne portes for petitioning of his Maiestie touching the Dammage wee Dailie sustaine by the Turkes of Algier, the marchantes of this Cittie assembled themselues, and made choice of an able man to haue ioyned with you in the same, and to have giuen you meeting in London according to your Desire by the 16th of this moneth, but contrarie to our expectacion the partie soe chosen by reason of his owne occasions not permitting him hath Desired to bee excused. The time giuen vs for consideracion of¹ soe waightie a matter was short, and the Day of your meeting is soe neere at hand that wee cannot preuaile with any able man vppon soe short warning to vndertake the iourney, notwithstanding wee Desire to heare from you, and shalbee readie hereafter to giue our best assistance In the meane time shall pray for your good successe and remaine

Bristoll the 13th of March 1632

Your louing Friendes

To the *Woorshipfull* our loving Fryndes
 Mr John Delbridge marchant and the
 rest of the Deputies of the westernne portes
 nowe ymployed in London to sollicite the
 suppressinge of the Turkishe pirates and
 Redeeming the Englishe captives these

Humfrey Hooke
 John Barker
 John Goninge
 John Tomlinson
 Andrew Charlton
 Richard Longe

Book of Trade, p. 216

401. The Copie of a Letter sent to Mr Luke Hodges² one of the
p. 255 Members of the howse of Commons.

¹ *consideracion* of above the line.

² M.P. for Bristol, 1646-1653.

Sir

Wee thancke you for your paynes and care in procureing vs the loane of a Frigott, which we intended to put forth, with all possible speed, had wee not received advice two dayes past of the takeing of seuerall Vessells of this place by the Irish Pirates, which losse (most reflecting on the forwardest of those intended Adventurers) disenableth them from prosecuting their purposes, and indeed (had wee gone on therein) it would not much have steeded vs, in regard those men now come from Waxford report that besides the many shippes of warr that place hath abroad, there is now preparing to goe forth Twenty sayle, some of considerable greatnes and strength designed for the Landes end and this Channell against the Newland and Vintage shippes comes home, By which you may conceive, that one single Frigott will little avayle vs, and therefore have here inclosed sent you a short Peticion to the Committee for the Navie,¹ to whome wee intreat you not only to deliver it to quicken them in the speedy accomplishment of our desires therein, but alsoe yourselfe to present our sad Condicion to the Honourable House of Commons, and to procure Mr Dodderidge and the Western Members assistance, (whome it likewise much concernes). Our Recorder hath bin written too, therein to second you. Expedition will much further the worke; Wee haue at present in the Porte Fower Parliament Frigottes, some of which haue layne here nere these two moneths and may yet longer (if money bee not dispatched downe to pay their much discontented Marriners). Sorry wee are, Sir, to see them lie like standing pooles here without motion to corrupt and be corrupted, whilst the enemy dare take our shippes almost out of the very Road. Wee need not, Sir, tell you that² the safeguarding of this Porte is not only the merchantes advantage, but derives its influential power not only to every Tradesman here, but to the adiacent Countyes, whilst it puts life and vigour to every Industrious Spirit and streames out manifold advantages to the whole Kingdome; And truly, Sir, it is not unknowne to³ vs that Fower of the Parliamantes shippes lying off the Barr of Waxford might easily not only keepe in those that are in, but happily take some of those that are out in their returne home, and rescue many a Prize in their entrance to that Harbo^r. A tender whereof many moneths past was made by Captain Crowther, but wee knowe not how, became abortive; Wee beseech you, Sir, to lay these thinges to your most serious thoughtes

¹ The petition, dated 2 September, 1648, is in the *Book of Trade*, p. 255.

² of struck out and *that* written above the line.

³ Followed by *the* struck through.

and soe to mannage it, that the issue may take those grudgeing apprehentions in many Merchantes breastes whoe deeme it hard to pay soe much Custome, and obteyne no proteccion, and procure a good soe much desired to these partes, which will oblige, Sir,

Your thanckfull freindes

Bristoll

9^o September

1648

Joseph Jackson Master

Edward Tyson

George Lane

} Wardens

Book of Trade, pp. 255, 256¹

402. 11 April 1650

Captives with the Turks²

Alsoe at this Courte, Mr William Dale, Mr William Yeamans, Mr Robert Yate, Mr Deyos, Mr Crofte and Mr Walter Tocknell are desired and intrated to drawe vp a Remonstrance touching those of and belonging to this Citty that are now in captivity with the Turkes. And to present it next Court day.

Hall Book I, 154

403. 3 February 1652

Shippes to be engaged to protect the Trade of the Port³

Alsoe at this Courte it was voted that the Company shall write to Mr Alderman Aldworth to procure the shippes Richard and Mary and the George to serve as men of warre for this Porte of Bristoll and the Channell thereof And it was then alsoe voted, That in case the said shippes cannot be obteyned for the said service, That the shippes Leopard and George shalbe desired to serve in the said employment. *Certain members were asked to find out the cost by the month of each ship and to report to the Master next morning.*

Hall Book I, 206

404. 15 October 1658

Convoy for the shipping⁴

Alsoe at this Courte Mr Joseph Jackson, Mr John Bowen, Mr Robert Cann, Mr Robert Aldworth, Mr Shershaw Cary and Mr John Jackson or any three of them, were chosen appoynted and aucthorized to write to the Commissioners of the High Courte of Admiraltye, to procure a Convoy for the Porte and Channell of Bristoll to guard all ships belonging to this Porte. And the said Comittee did Agree to meete concerning the same at the Hall on Munday next at Eight of the Clocke in the morninge.

Hall Book I, 287

¹ On 11 December, 1648, the Society thanked the Mayor, Aldermen and Sheriffs for sending a petition to London asking for ships of war to protect merchantmen from Irish and other pirates and agreed to send another petition in the name of the Society if need required (*Hall Book I*, 132, 133).

² The marginal note is in a different hand from the extract.

³ The marginal note is in a different hand.

⁴ The marginal note is in a different hand.

405. PETITION FOR A CONVOY 1665¹

To the Kings most Excellent Maiestie

The humble Petition of your Maiesties most loyall Subjectes the Merchantes of the City of Bristoll Adventurers to Virginia

Most humbly sheweth

That your Peticoners doe with all thankfulnes acknowledge your Maiesties grace and favor as well in granting them vppon their late Peticion a Convoy for their Shippes in their present Voyage towards Virginia, as alsoe in that Assurance your Maiestie was pleased to give them to take Care for their Securitie home.

Vppon Confidence whereof, your Peticioners (notwithstanding their great and almost insupportable losses susteyned this last yeere of their shippes and goodes by the Dutch) have for the supply of your Maiesties Subiectes in Virginia with men and goodes from this Kingdome (without a yeerely Continuance whereof your Maiesties good Subiectes there will inevitably be reduced to great Distresses) sent thither from this Porte (the Trade from London and some other Ports of this kingdome being by reason of Godes Visitacion of the Plague att present obstructed) Twentie and fower good Shippes richly laden, being a farr greater Number then before they intended to have sent, The safe retorne of which Shippes will produce a great advantage to your Maiestie in the Revenew of Customes and securing of a great Number of Mariners now imployed on the said Shippes for your Maiesties Navy, The Enemy, as your Peticioners Doe heare, making great preparacions to surprize the said Shippes in their retorne homewardes, which (if they shall accomplish) will become a great encouragement to them.

Your Peticoners doe therefore most humbly beseech your most sacred Maiestie to be graciously pleased to Order such a Convoy of your Maiesties Navy as to your Maiestie shall seeme meete, to sayle to Virginia aforesaid, there to receive your Peticoners said shippes, (there being noe other place convenient for their Coniunction, your Peticioners doe most humbly conceive) and to guard them home, The expeditious dispatch whereof your Peticioners doe in all submissivenes begg in respect their said shippes have long since sett sayle from hence, and (as they hope) may be ready suddenly to retorne homewardes

and your Peticoners (as in duetie bound) will ever pray etc.

¹ The petition is assigned to (?) September 1665 in *Cal. S.P.D. 1664-1665*, p. 577.

Gab : Deane	Hugh Watts
W ^m Willett	J ⁿ Pieter ^s on
Edward : Fielding	William Swimer
Will : Hayman	Thomas Ellis
Henry Creswicke	J ⁿ Pearce
William Colston	Peter Wraxall
Wa : Tocknell	Henry Hith
George Lane Junio ^r	John Cooke
Will Hasell	James Wathen
John Willoughby Maior	Samuel Wharton
Nath ^l Cale	Alex : James
Jo ⁿ Lawford	Ric Streamer
Thomas Langtone	Wm Crabb
	Richd Crumpe } sherifes

Endorsed. Merchants of Bristoll Peticon¹

P.R.O., S.P. 29/133 no. 66

406. 3 December 1667

Alsoe at this Courte it is voted and ordered, That Sir John Knight be made acq^uaynted by letter of the names and burthens of all reprizall shipp^s and where they were adjudged reprizall, And of the names of the seuerall Masters of them, And to procure an Act of Parliament to make them free shipp^s of England And to informe him of the names they were called by at the tyme of their seuerall Judicacions and the names by which they are now called (viz^t) of such shipp^s only whereof the Members of this Society are concerned, And that euery Member of this Society shall beare his owne chardge therein ; And not to be done at the chardge of the Haule.

Hall Book I, 421

407. 1671-72

paid Collonell John Roumsey³ for a gratuity for Sir Robert Southwell⁴ to procure 2 friggatts by order of the hall 20 guinneys in gold

21 00 00

Treasurer's Book II, 28

¹ See *Hall Book I*, 387, 23 December, 1665, for the setting up of another Committee to petition the king that a competent number of ships of greater force be added to those already appointed to guard the coast.

² Captured from the Dutch in the Second Dutch War.

³ Collector of Customs in Bristol.

⁴ For a petition to the king asking for a convoy in March 1672 and some correspondence over this with Sir Robert Southwell, Clerk to the Council, see *Book of Charters II*, 109-111. Southwell acquired Kingsweston in 1680, and some of his correspondence with John Romsey can be found in the *Southwell Papers* in the Bristol Central Library.

408. 10 November 1685

Then voted that twenty poundes be presented to Mr Thomas Phelps Junior for his good service in destroying the Sally men of Warr in Mamora.

Hall Book II, 278

409. PETITION FOR A CONVOY 1689¹

To the kings most Excellent Maiestie

Humbly sheweth

The humble petition of the merchants Adventurers within your Maiesties City of Bristoll.

That your peticoners expect from your Maiesties Plantacions in the West Indies and Virginia severall shippes hither bound And forasmuch as the seas are at present infested with French Privateers and Pirates And for that two Richly laden shippes of this Port designeing to putt into Kingsale did of late very narrowly escape them And because without a sufficient guard your Peticoners greatly feare others may fall into the enemies handes Your Peticoners therefor humbly implore your Maiestie that you would be graciously pleased to assigne some frigotts or men of warr to cruise off Cape Cleare on the Coasts of Ireland as well to protect all shippes bound for the said West Indies and Virginia either to this City or to any other of your Maiesties Ports in the Kingdom As to direct them not to stopp or touch at any place in Ireland Whereby your Majestie Customes will on their arrivall be effectually secured.

And your Peticoners as in duty bound shall for your Maiestie ever pray etc

W^m Jackson Mayo^r

Will' Hayman

Rich^d Lane

W^m Swymmer

W^m Donning

Jacob Beele

Em^d Arundell

Tho Willett

John Yeamans Jun

Jn^o Seward

Peter Saunders

Robert Kirke

Arthur Hart Master

Thomas Cole

Cha : Pope

George Hart

Henry Gibbes

Samuell Price

Edw Jones

Charles Stubbs

John Cary

G. Bishope

W^m Merricke

W^m Browne

Rich^d Champneys

} Wardens

Hall Book II, 407

¹ The petition is not dated, but it appears in the *Hall Book* between entries for May and August 1689.

410. 6 October 1690

Voted and ordered That the master, the warden, Mr Yeamans, Mr Alderman Donning, Mr Arthur Hart and Mr Swymmer be a Committee appointed to write to Sir Richard Harte (one of our members in Parliament) to sollicite the King and counsell for a generall liberty (if possible) Else for a proportionable liberty with other places and ports for sailing of our shippes that may be ready by 20th instant and for a sufficient number of men to saile them.¹ And it's left to same Comittee to mannage this affaire, and to take such methods herein as shalbe adviseable, And the said Committee or the maior number of them to meete when and where they please And such of the society as please may be present and lend their assistance.

Hall Book II, 452

411. 26 February 1692

12th 5th allowed
Mr Swymmer
etc

Voted and ordered That the twelve poundes and five shillings which Mr William Swymmer is in disburse for a proportion of expence in obteyning his maiesties letteres to our seuerall plantations abroad to prevent our shippes being stopd or imbargoed after laden be repayd him.

Hall Book II, 495

412. PETITION FOR A CONVOY. 17 OCTOBER 1692

master and others of the society wrote to Mr Robert Henley and inclosed sent a petition to the Lords of the Admiralty for some convoy shippes.

Hall Book II, 503

The Humble desires of the Merchants and Traders of the City of Bristoll to the Right Honourable the Lords of the Admiralty.

That there being now in the Port of Bristoll between 30 to 40 saile of shippes of considerable value and burthen outward bound for Virginia, Barbadoes, Leward Islands and Jamaica.

They Humbly desire their Lordshipps wilbe pleased to order such a convoy as may be sufficient to protect the said shippes from the French Privateers that att present infest this channell and the coast of Ireland.

The said convoy to be att Bristoll by the end of Nouember next and to have orders to see the said shippes one hundred and fifty leagues to the westward of Cape Cleare.²

¹ An embargo had been placed on the sailing of ships since both men and ships might be required for the war with France.

² Cape Clear on Clear Island off the south-west coast of Ireland.

Reasons why a convoy is more proper to come with such order to Bristoll then to any other place.

If the Convoy be appointed for Milford the fleet that sailes hence with a strong North East wind cannot gett in there but wilbe Drove to sea and soe loose the benefitt intended as alsoe exposed to the Privateers that lye twixt this and Milford

If a Convoy should be ordered att Kings-saile¹ then the many Privateers that now Cruce constantlye thereabouts will take these shippes in the way thither.

If a convoy should come hither with order to being these shippes to Plimoth itt wilbe a greater expence to their Majesties and hazzard to the merchants then to see them 150. Leagues att sea.

Because it requires two windes to carry shippes hence from Plimouth when the same wind with which they saile hence may in less time put them att the distance desired.

The same men of warr will likewise take under their Convoy the shippes bound to Ireland Spaine and Portugall.

That their Lordshipps wilbe pleased to appoint two or more Frigotts to cruse between Cape Cleare on the Coast of Ireland and Scilly.

And the like number from Cape Clear 20 to 30 leagues westward of the Blasquett² with orders to Convoy what English shippes they meet into safety and then to retorne to their stations.

Crusers thus posted wilbe a security to all shippes coming in from the westward, to all shippes trading to and from Ireland, Wales St. Georges Channell Cornewall etc and a check to the numerouseness of the Privateers on these Coasts.

Bristoll 17th October 1692

John Cooke Master for himselfe and the rest of the society of merchants

Hall Book II, 506³

413. 17 October 1692

Bristoll October the 17th 1692.

Sir

Wee have yours of the 15th instant and are all obliged to you For the care you have taken in laying our requests (as well as of all the traders in this City) before the Admiralty. Its observed

¹ Kinsale on the southern coast of Ireland.

² Great Blasket Island off the west coast of Ireland.

³ For concern about a convoy for the Virginia ships in January 1695, see *Hall Book III, 60.*

that most of our shippes were taken of the Blasquetts and the Cape where they expected to meete our men of Warr cruseing.

Inclosed we have putt in writing our humble requests and thoughts in relacion to Convoy and shippes of warr to Cruise which wee desire you will lay before the Right Honourable the Lords of the Admiralty.

And wee hope that when their Lordshipps have considered of what consequence The trade of this City and other places that will hereby be secured is to their Maiesties and the Kingdomes Interest they will readily grant our requests.

Wee returne you our hearty thanks for your former trouble and desire you will further take this and you will oblige the whole City in Generall and more perticulerly

Sir : Your Very Humble servant

John Cooke Master for myselfe and the
rest of the Society of Merchants.

superscribed

For Robert Henley Esquire
Att the Transportation office
London

Hall Book II, 507

414. 10 November 1692

Committee
about long
imbargoes etc.

Ordered That the master and master elect, Mr Treasurer, Mr Edward Tocknell, Mr James Price, Mr John Yeamans senior, Mr Charles Jones and Mr James Hollidge or the maior part of them be a Committee to inspect the greivances occasioned by the long imbargoes and other delays in our trade and are impowred to seeke redresse therein.

Hall Book II, 511

XI. THE MERCHANT VENTURERS' INTEREST IN EXPLORATION AND COLONIZATION

In the first part of the seventeenth century, the Society of Merchants in general, and certain of its members in particular, showed a considerable interest in exploration and colonization. Some general comments on this side of its work have been made in the Introduction.¹ A number of relevant documents have already been published. A group of papers in the Society's *Book of Trade* dealing with the proposed colonization of Northern Virginia in 1621-1623 appeared in the *American Historical Review*,² and those concerning Captain James's expedition in 1631 were printed by the Hakluyt Society.³ The Charter of the London and Bristol Newfoundland Company, in which a number of Merchant Venturers were interested, can be found in C. T. Carr's *Select Charters of Trading Companies*,⁴ and John Guy's account of his exploration in Newfoundland, contained in MS.250 in the Lambeth Library, has been printed in part by Purchas and in part by Commander Damer Powell.⁵ D. W. Prowse's *History of Newfoundland* also contains a number of Guy's papers.⁶ Only a short selection of documents has been printed here.

415. DEVELOPMENT OF VIRGINIA

Primo Die Aprilis⁷ Anno Regni Regis Jacobi quarto 1606.

Mr Thomas Hopkins and Mr Thomas Aldworthe merchauntes are appoynted to Conferre and Deale with the Inhabitantes of Bristoll and to Certifye Mr Deputye and the Aldermen his

¹ See p. xli.

² Miller Christy, 'Attempts towards Colonization: the Council for New England and the Merchant Venturers of Bristol', *American Historical Review*, iv, 1899, pp. 678-702.

³ *The Voyages of Captain Luke Foxe of Hull, and Captain Thomas James of Bristol*, Hakluyt Society, vol. 88, 1894, cxxxix-clxviii.

⁴ Selden Society, vol. xxviii, 1913, pp. 51-62. Seven of the eleven Bristol members of the Newfoundland Company held at various times the office of Master of the Society or Treasurer or both.

⁵ *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas his Pilgrimes*, 20 vols., Glasgow, 1905, vol. xix, 410; Commander Damer Powell, 'The Explorations of John Guy in Newfoundland', *Geographical Journal*, lxxxvi, 512-518.

⁶ London, 1896, pp. 94-96, 99, 125-128.

⁷ *Martii* struck through. *Aprilis* written above the line.

bretherne what every man will adventure towardses this action of Virginia, that annswere may be therevpon made to Mr Mayors letterre with as convenient speede as may bee.¹

C.C.P., 1598-1608, p. 115

416. SETTLEMENT IN NEWFOUNDLAND

1609 . . . Also this year Mr John Guy merchant (being one of the Councill of Bristoll) Intended a Plantation in the Newfoundland, and had gotten a Licence and Charter of the king for the same,² having some Rich Merchants of London joyned with him for the better Fraying of the charge and bringing it to Pass : and likewise many of this city did put in their Moneys hoping to reap Benefitt thereby in the End, and so Mr Guy with some other Young Merchants (having fitted themselves with Men and other things necessary) took shipping for Newfoundland to make a Triall of the Place by staying there all the winter, and for their own Provision and Sustenance, to make Triall whether the Land would bear Corn, and whether those Cattle and swine they carried over with them would Live and Increase in the Land.

1611 . . . Also this year Mr Guy did carry to Newfoundland 10 Heyfers, 2 Bulls, 60 Goats, and 16 women.

Bristol Record Office : MS. Calendar no. 07831

417. BRISTOL'S HOPE. 1617-18

Alsoe this yeere Diuers particuler marchantes of this Society Did sett Forwardes the plantacion of a porcion of Land in the Country of Newfoundland called Bristolles Hope, which was grannted and confirmed vnto them, by the Treasouro^r and Company of the Cittyes of London and Bristoll For the Colonie or Plantacion in Newfoundland.³

Book of Charters I, 57

¹ The Charter of the Virginia Company (P.R.O., Pat. Rolls, 3 James I, part 19) authorized the establishment of two groups, one from London, the other from Bristol, Exeter and Plymouth. For further details of this unsuccessful attempt to establish a northern colony, see J. Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, pp. 27-28. In the record of the Council meeting, entries are made against the names of various members present showing how much they were willing to subscribe.

² P.R.O., Pat. Rolls, 8 James I, part 8. The company was known as 'The Treasurer and the Company of Adventurers and Planters of the City of London and Bristol for the Colony of Plantation in Newfound Land'. It had forty-eight members, eleven of whom were Bristolians.

³ Apparently this colony was set up not far from Guy's colony at Sea Forest. See D. W. Prowse, *History of Newfoundland*, p. 137; J. Latimer, *Seventeenth Century Annals*, pp. 67-68.

418. NEW ENGLAND SCHEMES

The Maiors answere to Sir Ferdinand Gorge¹ in the behalfe of the Generalty, touching his demann^d.²

Sir,

The letter of the Lordes of his Maiesties most honorable privie Counsell togeather with the Articles concerning the affaires of New England which I receyved from you, I have deliuered to the Master and Company of merchantes of this Citty whoe for answere therevnto have informed mee that at their generall assembly twoe dayes past, they pervsed the contentes thereof and doe finde the said Articles so difficult that at present they cannot Conclude in regard of the shortnes of tyme to them allotted and for that many of their Company experienced in the like affaires are nowe from whome,³ Those which are here intended to have had some Conference with your selfe, and to that end did send a speciall Messenger to your Inne in Bristoll, where hee spake with one of your servantes, whoe reported that you would bee here the next morning for which cause they deferred their answer vntill your Coming. And nowe seeing that your busines will not permitt you, the matter being of great consequence and concerning as well other places as this Cittie, they determined not to doe any thing for the generall without further deliberacion and also advise of the Adventurers of the other Portes, with whome they meane to conferr. Onely they desire that if, in the meane time, any particuler men of their Company shall set forth any shipping on a fishing voyadg for that Country then to allowe you an indifferent rate, proporcioning the same by the tonne, or otherwise, as shall be agreed vppon which yf you please to entertayne, some twoe of them will repaire vnto you, or els send you answer thereof with all expedicion, either to Plimouth or London and soe, having not elce to enlarge for presente,

doe rest

Your Loving frind

Bristoll this xiiijth of
October 1621

*Book of Trade, p. 110*⁴

¹ Sir Ferdinando Gorges of Wraxall, Somerset, who played a leading part in the efforts to colonize Virginia.

² The heading is in a different hand from the copy of the letter.

³ *Sic.*

⁴ This is one of ten documents in the *Book of Trade* referring to the proposed colonization scheme. See p. 199, note 2. For the background of this scheme, see C. M. MacInnes, *Bristol A Gateway of Empire*, pp. 96-106.

419. 17 November 1623¹

Alsoe this yeare in December 1623, certeyne letters were brought to the Maior of Bristoll from his maiestie and the Earle of Penbrooke Lord Lieutenant of this Citty concerninge a plantacion to bee setled in Newe England, with certeyne Reasons and Articles sheweinge what benefitt mighte thereby ensue to his maiesties Dominions the coppies whereof remayne amonge the Recordes of this Societie² to whome it pleased the Mayor and Aldermen of this Citty to referre the Consideracion thereof for the benefitt of this Citty, whoe vpon Conference had with the agent of the President and Counsell of Newe England, Determined to hould a parte in the saide Plantacion yf the priuiledges and Condictions of their Patent should bee agreeable to the expectacion of this Societie.³

Book of Charters I, 96

420. JOHN GUY'S WILL, 21 FEBRUARY 1626

... Item I doe give and devise vnto my sonn Thomas Guy one parte of my lands in Newfoundland, called the Seaforrest in fower equall partes to be devided to haue and to hould to him the said Thomas Guy and to his heires and assignes for ever. Item I doe give and devise vnto Robert Guy one other parte of my said landes in Newfoundland called the Seaforrest in fower equall partes to be devided to have and to hould to him the said Robert Guy and to his heires and assignes for ever. Item I doe give and devise vnto my sonn William Guy one other parte of my said landes in Newfoundland called the Seaforreste in fower equall partes to be devided. ...

Bristol Record Office : Great Orphan Books III, 276

421. CAPTAIN JAMES AND THE NORTH-WEST PASSAGE⁴

The Companies Letter to Capteyne James concerninge their Desire of his care in prosecuting the Designe⁵

¹ The date of the Annual General Court. The events for the year November 1623–November 1624 are recorded under this heading.

² In the *Book of Trade*.

³ The scheme came to nothing.

⁴ The documents in the *Book of Trade* dealing with this expedition are found on pp. 184–194, 200, 200–205. See Hakluyt Society, vol. 88.

⁵ The heading is in a different hand from the copy of the letter.

Captaine James.

Wee haue receyved yours of the 26th vltimo, with the inclosed from Sir Thomas Roe,¹ the Coppie hereof wee nowe send you herewith, as alsoe of your answer thereto, whereby you may perceyve what doth passe twixt vs, hee doth presuppose that wee haue already fitted a shipp, But you knowe the Contrary, and that wee haue done noe more then to procure adventurers for 800^l or thereabouts, And that the fraightinge of a shipp is deferred, till wee knowe from you the Priviledges wee shall obteyne (yf the benefitt of the discouery bee appropriated). But wee rather desire that it might Continue free from² all his maiesties subjectes promiscuously. It wilbee sufficient honowr and advancement vnto vs, to bee Instrumentes of soe greate good. But yf his Maiestie and the State in their wisdomes shall thinke fitt to appropriate it Then wee must rely on Sir Thomas Roe his faire offers and promise, and your provident Circumspection in our behalfe. It wilbee very difficult for vs to procure a fitt shipp suddenly for the white Angell will not be had, and the William and John is nott arrived nor expected this moneth, Therefore wee advise you to bee very cautious howe you engage vs and yourselfe to bee ready this springe, vnlesse his Maiesties pleasure in the business bee deliuered within fewe daies, And that you are assured to gett a fitt ship in London yf wee faile heere. This wee write not out of any disaffection to the busines, for wee all Continue very Constant, and well perswaded therein, but it is onely to prevent any disreputacion or disarragement which may befall both your selfe and vs yf wee should promise and not performe, or doe it vnseasonably. Thus leauinge the Successe of the Interprize to the blessinge of God, and Commendinge our loveinge salutacions to your selfe, wisheinge you all true happiness, and desiringe too bee advised of your proceedings,

Wee Rest

Your affectionate Fryndes

Bristoll : February 3^o. 1630

John Barker
Richard Longe
John Tayler
Giles Elbridge

Sir,

I thanke you for your kind letter directed to my selfe. Lett mee request you to recommend my humble respectes to Mr Cary

¹ Sir Thomas Roe, 1581?-1644, explorer, diplomatist, ambassador, economist, scholar.

² *Sic.*

and his noble Consort, whoe are pleased to accept and esteeme the toies I sent them much more then they merrit. It is their humanitie and noblenesse soe to doe

Yours John Barker

To our worthie and much respected Frynd, Captain Thomas James, at the three Cupps in Bred streete these : In London

Book of Trade, p. 186

422. To the Kinges most Excellent Maiestie

The humble petition of Thomas James, in the behalfe of your *merchantes* adventurers, Citizens of the Citty of Bristoll.

Whereas your Maiesties most faithfull subjectes, the Citizens of your Citty of Bristoll, vnderstandinge that your Maiestie hath pleased not onely to desire the discovery of the North west passage into the south sea, but to grace and protect all those that shall indeavor^r to seeke it, whereby encouraged your said subjectes the *merchantes* of Bristoll haue determined to sett one good shipp well furnished and provided for such a service, which shalbee ready in the beginninge of May next, and in full assurance of your Maiesties gracious disposicion and equall distribucion of your favors to all your subjectes that shall equallie pursue the waies of honour and the benefitt of your Maiesties Kingdomes, they haue presumed most humbly to petition your Maiestie

That you wilbee pleased to grannt vnto them, the adventurers of the Citty of Bristoll, such equall shares and priuiledges both of Trade and Libertie, as you shall vouchsafe to grannt to others the adventurers of the Citty of London proporcionably to their Charge and adventures, And they (as in dutie bound) will ever pray for your Maiesties longe and happie Raigne.

Book of Trade, p. 190

423. The Coppie of a warrant for paiment of the companies wages of the Henrieta Maria

Whereas for the setting forth and furnisheing of the shippe called the Henrieta Maria of Bristoll whereof Thomas James goeth Captaine pretending a voidage by the grace of god for the discoverie of the Northwest passage to China at the costes and charges of the societie and companie of *marchantes* adventurers of the cittie of Bristoll. It was at a generall assemblie of the said

societie in ample number ordered and agreed that Humfrie Hooke now Maister of the said societie, Andrew Charlton, Miles Jackson and Thomas Cole with the assistance of the said captaine Thomas James being adventurers in the said voiadge should bee husbandes and stewarddes for the mannageing and furnishing of the said shippe with all prouisions and necessities, and forasmuch as the saide husbandes haue accordinglie fitted furnished and made readie the said shipp not onelie with all sortes of munition, ordnance, Artillerie victualls prouisions and necessities whatsoever requisite for the said voiadge, but alsoe with an expert and able Maister, twoe Maisters mates, and other marriners and serviceable seamen, and boies whose seuerall names and monethlie wages agreed vppon, are mencioned and expressed in a schedule or portledge bill herevnto annexed.¹ Now these presentes witnesseth that the Maister wardens and Comminaltie of the arte or misterie of marchantes adventurers of the citty of Bristoll for the accomplishing of the agreement of the said husbandes and rewarding of the Maister and companie of the said shipp for their paines and seruices to bee donne in the voiadge, doe hereby grannt promise and vndertake that euerie person whose name is mencioned in the said Scheedule serueing in the said shipp and voiadge shalbee fully satisfied and paid his seuerall and respective monethlie wages according to the rates sett downe in the said schedules, that is to say for euerie moneth and parte of a moneth that each man shall serue and continue in the said shipp vnder the commandd and obedience of the said captaine Thomas James and his Deputed officers. In witness whereof to one part of this writing Indented remaineing with the Maister and companie of the said shipp The said Maister Wardens and Comminaltie haue caused their common seale to bee sett and affixed and to the other part hereof, remaineing with the said Maister, Wardens and Comminaltie the Maister and companie of the said shipp haue subscribed their names the thirtith day of Aprill, anno Domini 1631, in the seaventh yeere of the Raigne of our Soueraigne lord Charles by the grace of god Kinge of England Scotland France and Ireland Defendo^r of the faith, etc.

Book of Trade, p. 194

424. Nouember 23. more for 1j¹¹ : xvij^s paide vnto Thomas Turner baker by appointment of the Woorship Humfrie Hooke, for bredd

¹ There is no copy of this in the *Book of Trade*.

by him delivered for the victualing of the shipp the Henrieta Maria sett forth by the Company for the discoverie of the Northwest passage to China

51 18 00

Treasurer's Book I, 16

425. Inprimis for j^clxxxj¹¹ xviijs j^d paide vnto Mr Humfrye Hooke master of the Company of marchantes of this Citty towards the payment of the Companies wadges of the Henrieta Maria from the Northwest discoverie and for dischargeinge of Debtes oweinge, the which hee repaide vnto George Butcher the Collector to pay the saide wages and discharge the saide debtes as may appeare

181¹¹ 18^s 01^d

Treasurer's Book I, 17¹

¹ These are the only two items in the *Treasurer's Book* which refer to the expedition. It would appear that only part of the cost was paid by the Society. Presumably the rest, including the chartering of the ship, was paid by a group of merchants in their private capacities and so does not appear in the official accounts.

XII. RELATIONS WITH THE LONDON COMPANIES

Something has been said in the Introduction about Bristol's relations with the London Companies in the seventeenth century,¹ but the subject is a big one and requires for adequate treatment more space than is available in this book. The points of contact and of conflict were many, and the documents in this section concern the French Company, the Spanish Company, the Levant Company, the London merchants who tried to get control of the trade in Shrewsbury cottons, the London Vintners, the Merchant Adventurers of England, the East India Company and the Royal African Company. In this short selection, it is possible to illustrate only a very small part of the story, but an effort has been made in the notes to indicate where other material can be found. Certain documents bearing on the relations between the Society and the London organizations have been included in other sections of this book.²

THE FRENCH COMPANY³

426. 7 June 1609

Righte honorable,

my humble duties remembred, May it please your honor to be advertized that Immediatly vpon the receipte of your Lordshippes letter⁴ of the xxvijth of Aprill last, I made the Contentes thereof knowne to the Company of Merchantes of this Cytie concerninge his Maiesties pleasure for the establishinge of a governemente of

¹ See pp. xxxvi-xl.

² See pp. 1-5, 19 ff. See also Index: *Companies*.

³ For some useful notes on the French Company, see E. Lipson, *Economic History of England*, 1947, ii, 363-364. An Act of 1606 had declared the trade with France open to all the king's subjects (*Statutes of the Realm*, iv, part ii, 1083). The Society had tried without success to get its charter excepted from this act (see p. 6, no. 3). A number of difficulties arose in the trade and the Lord Treasurer Salisbury was willing to listen to the arguments of those who maintained that the merchants should be organized for self-protection. He made inquiries as to the feelings of the western towns on the proposed regulation, and Bristol's emphatic rejection of the plan is given here. For similar opposition from Tiverton, Lyme Regis, Chard, and Exeter, see *Cal. S.P.D. 1603-10*, pp. 516, 534, 535, 537.

⁴ *lve* in the manuscript, with a line denoting contraction.

Merchantes tradinge France ; wherevpon they (havinge deliberately conferred together heere in their Common hall) have returned their annswere vnto me, that they have without any offence or inconvenience for many yeeres past continewed their trade of Merchandizinge into France and into all other parts beyond the Seas (excepte only the oulde Hannse)¹ by vertue of ancient letteres Patentes grannted by his hignes noble progenitors and confirmed by acte of Parliamente, And therefore they moste humbly desier that by your good Lordshippes favour they may enjoy the benefitt and libertie of the said letteres patentes for the avoydinge of many inconveniences and greate detryment which may otherwise happen unto them by the pollitique devises of the Merchantes of London, who for their owne singuler gaine, doe alwaies seeke to suppressse our charteres and priviledges for trade of Merchandize ; and haue drawn 700¹¹ at a tyme from the Marchantes of this Cytie for tradinge into Turkey and Venice,² where this Cytie (dependinge only on trade of Merchandize) oughte by their said Charteres to haue free Trafficke, And soe not findinge any of them willinge (for the causes aforesaid) to be Conioyned to any other Company, I leaue the premisses to your honorable Consideracion, moste humbly betakeing your honor to the moste holy tuition of the Allmightie

At Bristoll this vijth of June 1609

Your honors moste humble at Comanndmente

John Butcher mayor

To the righte honorable my very good Lord, the Earle of Salisbury, Lord highe Treasurer of England

Endorsed : 7 June 1609 Maior of Bristoll to my Lord concerning the marchants trading into Fraunce

P.R.O., S.P. 14/45, no. 106

427. 6 November 1610

This yeere alsoe, the Companie of marchantes of this Citty had a suite dependinge concerninge their Commerce and trade into Francke, wherein Mr Alderman Whitsone was employed, the Charge whereof for this yeere amounted vnto

xx¹¹

Book of Charters I, 43

¹ The Charter of the Merchant Venturers of Bristol expressly forbade them to encroach on the monopoly of the Merchant Adventurers of England.

² A reference to the Levant Company.

428. 8 October 1611

Alsoe this yeere the Charges of the suite concerninge the French Company amounted (as Doth appeare by William Fleete his booke) to the somme of

j¹¹ ijs¹

Book of Charters I, 45

429. 1632

A letter to the Gouverno^r of the marchantes of Exeter concerning the French busines.²

by your letter of the 27th of this instant,³ you desire an able and experienced marchant to bee sent vnto you from this Cittie ; the marchantes of this place vnderstand not any necessitie thereof, neither haue I received any order from the lordes of his Maiesties most honourable priuie counsell for the raiseing of any money for the French busines

And soe I rest.

Your loueing Friend

H: Y.⁴

Book of Trade, p. 201

430. 19 June 1632

Mr Holworthie and Mr Brownes answere to the former letter,⁵ p. 202 and of what passed in their Communicacion with the Comittee

Right Woorshipfull

Vppon Receipt of your Deputacion and instructions by Mr Browne concerning the French busines, It came very seasonable for to auoide mutteringe for omission that way. The next morning presenting our selues to the clarke of the Counsell to record our

¹ In spite of provincial opposition, the French Company was incorporated in 1611. For its Charter, see C. T. Carr, *Select Charters of Trading Companies*, pp. 62-78. It was not intended to be an exclusively London Company, and only 201 of its 530 members were London merchants. No Bristol merchants joined, presumably because none wished to do so. For later opposition to the Company from Bristol, see *Book of Trade*, Accounts 1611-12, 1613-14. For opposition from other sources, see *Acts of the Privy Council*, 1613-14, pp. 172, 206, 247-248.

² Control of the French trade was again a live issue in 1632 and 1633. The debate raged on two points, (a) whether the trade should be in the hands of a regulated Company, (b) whether the merchants of the various towns engaged should contribute towards the compensation demanded by the French for damage done to them. Bristol and Exeter took opposite sides. In its opposition to regulation Bristol was supported by other western ports against Exeter and London, but stood alone in refusing to contribute to the compensation. For a letter from Exeter of 8 August, 1632, and Bristol's reply, see *Book of Trade*, pp. 198-199, 201.

³ See *Book of Trade*, p. 199.

⁴ Henry Yate, Mayor of Bristol, 1631-32.

⁵ Dated 9 June, 1632, giving instructions to Holworthy and Browne. *Book of Trade*, pp. 201-202.

appearance as others of the out portes had donne, wee found an order draweing vpp by direccion of the lordes wherein fower merchantes of London and fower of the westernne portes, namelie of Exon, Totness, Dartmouth and Dorchester, were appointed to treat of an accommodacion fôr laieng impositions vppon all goodes to bee exported and iimported out of the kingdome of France for reimbursement of moneis expended concerning Marteau and de Launey arrestes¹ and the explanation of the Treaties of 1605 and 1610 concerning draperies, and then to prepare the busines for a hearing before the lordes; And conferring with the westernne men who conceived that those of Exceter weare readie to wind with the Londiners to settle a Reglement for the French trade and to p.203 lay an imposition vppon goodes as aforesaid, Totnes Dartmouth and Dorchester men motioned and procured that one for the Citty of Bristoll and one for Plimouth might bee added in the said order with twoe more for London, And on Saturday last at our first meeting togeather to resolue on the pointes in the said order, wee found the Exceter men and Londiners verie earnest and violent to lay a taxe on all goodes as aforesaid, but the others of the westernne partes with ourselues did withstand them, And wee hope they will continue with vs in that mind. And after much debating about Marteau de Launey busines which, it seemes, after the peace² was againe reviuied, the same not growing by reason of the staies made at Plimouth (as in your instruccions to vs you mention) but as for restitution of goodes long since taken by Mannering which many of our nation have maruailed, which being revived, the Ambassadors St^t Isaack Wake (whoe died latelie) was emploied and tooke paines for the quenching thereof to prevent future mischiefe that otherwise might followe, the Exeter men declaring in their petition to the lordes that one thousand poundes would beare the charge and cleere that busines, and that they had beene at 2000¹¹ charge more for the cleering of their goodes arrested at Roan and of good vines³ that must bee levied for the settling of trade and explanation of the former Treaties concerning draperie, And after much debating of those pointes and levies to bee made vppon all goodes which was much vrged, the west councitmen of

¹ In 1622 certain English merchants claimed that goods of theirs worth £2,000 had been taken at sea by Mathew de Launay who was supported by Thomas Marteau of the French East India Company. Reprisals followed and a considerable quarrel developed. Claims were still outstanding in 1632. See *Acts of the Privy Council, 1621-23*, p. 236; *1623-25*, p. 22; *1625-26*, pp. 35, 36.

² Peace with France in 1630.

³ ? fines.

the aforesaid portes with all others of Barnstable, Lime and other places gaue their free consent for the raising of the said 1000¹ to put an end to that busines and to lay it in some fitting proporcion vpon each port according to their bulke of trade, which being a generall busines, wee see noe meanes to avoid it but that a part thereof wilbee laid vppon the Cittie, for great complaintes haue beene made to the lordes by such as haue suffered thereby, and theyr feare of what may followe (if the busines bee not taken vpp) moves their *lordships* to bee much bent to put an end to that business which cannot bee avoided ; onelie wee shall labour and strive to bring it to as low a summe for the Cittie as wee may. And whereas a Reglement¹ and companie is aymed at by the Londiners and Exceter men with an imposicion too bee laid on all goodes as aforesaid, wee and others of the westerne portes are vtterlie against it, whereby wee conceiue there wilbee noe companie established, And wee shall withstand the intended imposicion what wee may, hoping those of the our portes will wind with vs therein, whereof shortlie wee shall aduise you further (god willing). Thus for the present, not haueing other, with our dutie and Due respectes to your *worships*

wee rest and remaine, Committing you to god

Your *Worships* to be Commannded

London the 19th of
June 1632

Richard Holworthie
Hugh Browne

To the Right *worshipfull* Henrie Yate Mayor and the *worshipfull*
the Aldermen of the Cittie of Bristoll

Book of Trade, pp. 202, 203

431. 23 June 1632

The Company answeere to their Agent in London concerninge
the French busines

Mr Holworthie and Mr Browne

Wee Received your letter of the 19th present and therby doe vnderstand that the marchantes of London with those of Exceter and others of the westerne portes Intend the raising of 1000¹ to cleere the busines about Monsieur Marteau and De Launey which hath beene longe dependinge. Wee desire you to follow your former instructions, and not consent to any imposicion or charge that shalbee required of any Commodity which shalbee exported

¹ See *Cal. S.P.D. 1633-34*, p. 271, for a later proposal of 1 November 1633, in which the Exeter merchants proposed to the Londoners that the merchants of the north and east should be under the control of London, and those of the west under Exeter.

or imported to or from France more then formerlie hath beene accustomed, nor yet to yeeld to contribute towards the levieng of that thousand poundes, for wee know not how to raise it in this Cittie, haueing soe manie disbursementes and paimentes alreadie on foote (as you well know) which wee cannot avoid, And therefore doe hope that you will doe your best endeauors to cleere this Cittie from any further charge for that matter wherein wee desire your furtherance and (if cause shalbee) to make such aunswere on this Citties behalfe vnto the lordes of his Maiesties most honourable priuie Counsell as shalbee agreeable vnto the estate thereof, being at present charged with more than can bee well borne, considering the decay of trade in this Cittie haueing little recourse to those partes of France nor any trade in Draperie as those of London and Exceter have, and haueing not else etc.¹

Bristol 23 June 1632

Book of Trade, p. 204

THE SPANISH COMPANY. 28 JULY 1632²

432. The Privy Counsell's Letter concerninge the Incorporating of a Company to trade to Spaine.

After our hartie Comendacions, Whereas his Maiestie is graciously pleased vppon humble suite of the marchantes of the Cittie of London tradinge for Spayne to grannt that they whoe trafficque thither shalbee incorporated in a Company by Pattent yf vppon deliberacion it shalbee found fitt, for the preventinge of those great disorders and inconveniences that have growne heretofore by a loose manner of trade, not subject to government, Forasmuch as it is meete and just, that the other merchantes of this kingdome vsinge that trade should bee likewyse heard, it, beinge a Comon cause, wee doe therefore hereby require you (whoe are of that

¹ In a letter of 25 February, 1633, to Roger Mallake, governor of the Company of Merchants of Exeter, Humphry Hooke repudiated any liability for a share of the £1,000 compensation, but said he would try to persuade the merchants to give £50 if this quit them of all liability. *Book of Trade*, p. 212. In 1637, the merchants of Bristol complained to the Privy Council that although they had contributed £50 to a fund to settle the French trade, the Exeter Company had not given a proper account of the money and was now demanding further sums from Bristol. P.R.O., P.C.2/48, pp. 368, 369, 401.

² For Bristol membership of the Spanish Company in 1605, see p. 2. The trade was thrown open by Act of Parliament in 1606, but there were a number of attempts to revive the Company, of which this is one. For further details and references, see V. M. Shillington and A. B. Chapman, *Commercial Relations of England and Portugal*, pp. 146-176; E. Lipson, *Economic History of England*, 1947, ii, 364-366. The attempts were unsuccessful.

number) to Chouse amongst you twoe or three fitt persons, and to send them fully instructed, Soe as they may bee here on the 24th of next moneth, or at thend thereof at the farthest, to Conferr with the said merchantes of London, and such other as shalbee sent for that purpose, from other places, vppon like order from vs, that vppon Conference togeather, you may bee^e ready and prepared, when you shalbee called to attend this bord, for the dispatch of the busines, And soe we bid you hartily farewell, From Whitehall the 28th of July 1631

Your loveinge Fryndes

To our loveinge Fryndes, the merchantes of the Citty of Bristoll and of that Ancient Devision, and to every of them tradinge into Spayne and Portugall.

Lo. Keeper Kelly
Manchester Falkland

Lindesay London
Bridgewater
Dorchester

Dickenson

Book of Trade, p. 196

THE LEVANT COMPANY¹

433. 6 November 1617

This yeare² the saide Mr John Barker and Mr John Whitsone Aldermen were ymployed to sollicite the Lordes of his Maiesties moste honorable privie Counsell concerninge theire Free trade vnto the Levant partes For Corrans and to mayneteyne the Charter of this Societie (in that behalfe) against the London Turkie Companie, by which meanes they obteyned a favourable Decree, and libertie of traffique into those partes. Whose Charges and expences in those affayres amounted to the somme of lxxxj^l vs. iiii^s^d

Book of Charters I, 57

434. 10 February 1618

A letter to the Company from Mr Whitson and Mr Barker concerninge theire proceedings at the Counsell Table for ymportinge Corrans.

After our hartiest comendacons etc. Since our repayre vnto

¹ There are a considerable number of references in the Society's records to relations with the Levant or Turkey Company. See *Book of Trade*, pp. 51-57, 205-207, 209-211, 219, 257-265; *Hall Book I*, 370-371, 373-4, 390; *Book of Charters I*, 57. See also J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, 137-140; *Seventeenth Century Annals*, 65-66, 332-333, 351-352.

² I.e. 1617-1618.

this place wee have solicited our Lord highe steward¹ and other Lordes of his Maiesties most honorable privie Counsell for a speedy and favourable hearing at the counsell board which wee hope to obteyne soe soone as the affaires of state will permitt. In the meane time wee doe observe by the passage of our busines that wee are in danger to be overruled by yeelding unto a Composicion² for ymporting a certeyne quantety of Currantes yeerely which wee are resolved to refuse without the approbacion and allowance of the Company of marchantes with you, in regard they weare peremptory at the last assemblie to bee Free without lymittacion or wholly exempted. Ourselves likewise assented with them in opinion at that tyme, yet wee must subscribe to the annient Englishe proverbe (It is better to incurre inconveniencie then mischiefe) Howsoever if you shalbee pleased to entertayne composicion, wee wilbee carefull it shalbee done with such caution as shall noe way infringe or prejudice our charters. Thus expecting your speedy and effectual answeres to the premisses wee comitt you to god Resting

Your Loving and respectfull friendes

London the xth
February 1617

John Whitson
John Barker

To the Woorshipful our Lovinge frindes Thomas James, Mathew Haviland and Robert Aldworth Aldermen of Bristoll or vnto either of them these Deliuier in Bristoll

Book of Trade, p. 51

435. 16 February 1618

The answer of the Company to the former letter

After our harty Comendacions etc, having communicated your letter to the Company of marchantes of this City, wee finde them all of the same resolucion that they weare of when you weare present at the Hall, and they are desirous that the Lordes would be pleased to referre the validitie of our Charter to the lawe. Notwithstanding for that you may see greate cause theare to yeeld to that which heere wee shall not thincke well of, wee cannot give you direction particularlie in it but Doe referre the carriage of the busines to your good discreccions, prayeng you alwaies soe to conclude that our Charter may not bee damnified thereby and

¹ William, Earl of Pembroke.

² In the end, the Company got permission to import 200 tons a year on paying a composition to the Levant Company of 6s. 8d. a ton.

rather then to bee out borne, yt is thoughte fitt here that the Queenes highnes be petitioned in the name of the Mayor and Cominaltie of this Citty to protect vs for the maintenance of our ancient liberties and Charter. Thus leaveing you and your affaires to the proteccion of the Almightye doe rest

Your loveinge fryndes

Thomas James
Mathewe Haviland
Robert Aldworth
Abell Kitchen
John Guy
John Gonninge
John Langton
Humfry Hooke

Richard Holworthy
Thomas Wrighte
William Jones
Giles Elbridge
Francis Creswicke
Walter Ellis
William Griffith

Bristoll this xvjth of Feb 1617

To the Woorshipful our Very Loving frindes John Whitson and John Barker marchantes at the three Cupps in Bred street London

Book of Trade, p. 52

436. 1617-18

more lxiij¹¹ xvj^s payd Mr John Barker *master* of the said Company the 10th Aprill 1618, and is in¹ ful payment of Mr Whitsonne and his expences in prosecuting the suite with the Leuant Company as by their accompt may appeare

o64 16 00

Treasurer's Book I, 4

437. 19 May 1632

The Turkye Company's Letter to the merchantes of Bristoll for *p. 205* payment to bee made of 6/s 8^d per ton vpon Currans ymported from Zannt and Zephalaria² with Coppies of orders made by them for the better governement of trade there

After our verie hartie Commendacions. Whereas vpon seuerall hearinges at the Councell board (in the yeere 1617) of the differences betweene the Levant Companie and some of the marchantes of that Citty vpon their suite to haue libertie to import Currans from the Ilandes of Zannt and Ceffalaria for the vse of the Cittie and Countrie thereabouts, their *Lordships* were pleased (not withstanding the Companies priuiledges for the sole trade in that Commoditie with a prohibition to all other his Maiesties subiectes) to order that the marchantes of that place should haue licence to

¹ *is in* above the line.

² Zante and Cephalonia off the west coast of Greece.

import twoe hundred tons of Currans yeerelie thither for the space of three yeeres, paieing vnto the Companie by way of acknowledgement a dutie of 4^{li} per hundred for euerie hundred of Currans soe brought in, which dutie hath for manie yeeres past beene detained and not paid according to the said orders. And whereas this Companie haue of late yeeres sustained great losses and preiudice in that trade of Currans as well by the Greekes enhanncing of the price, the Venetians imposing manie new and vnwonted duties vppon the said Commoditie, as alsoe by the irregularitie of the facto^{rs} and frequent and vntimelie comming in of shippes to lade, for prevention of which inconueniencies and the advanceing of the trade for the time to come for the generall good of all that are anie way interested therein, wee haue made seuerall orders the contentes whereof will appeare to you by the coppie enclosed.¹ Our desire to you is that you will publish this our letter, and these our orders to all such of that Cittie as are any way interested in the Curran trade, and that aswell themselues as their facto^{rs} abroad by their appointment may bee conformable thereto in
p. 206 euerie particuler as alsoe that wee may redresse the said duties of 4^{li} per Centum for the time already past and for the time to come. The same being soe long since vppon full hearing and mature deliberation ordered by the lordes that soe wee may reape the benifit of our owne actes made for the generall good of the trade and traders, and haue noe cause of complaint against you of that place in any kind whatsoever. And soe not doubting but you wilbee readie to aunswere our expectacions herein especiallie considering that some of you are members of our Companie² and haue taken oath to bee observant of our orders Wee Commend you to godes proteccion And remaine

Your verie loueing Friendes

London this 19th of

May 1632

To Mr John Barker and Mr Richard Holworthie at Bristoll

Hugh Hamersley governo^r
and 21 other signatures

Book of Trade, pp. 205, 206

438. *23 June 1632*

p. 210 The Company theire answere to the Turkie marchantes with theire resolucion vnto the former letter and order.

¹ Orders of General Courts of the Turkey Company, 11 July, 1628, and 25 January, 1632. *Book of Trade*, pp. 207-210.

² There was nothing to prevent Bristol merchants joining the Levant Company, but normally they were unwilling to join organizations outside Bristol.

Right *Worshipfull*

Your letter beareing date the 19th of May directed to our neighbo^{rs} John Barker and Mr Richard Holworthie, as alsoe the Coppie of certaine orders made by your Companie regulating the buieing and shipping of Currans at Zaunt and Ceffalonia haue beene Communicated to vs by them, which wee haue dueliie perused and considered, and therevppon wee adresse vnto you this our annswere: first concerning the buieing of our proporcion of Currans, wee will giue speciall order vnto our factor or factors which shall *p. 211* hereafter buy and provide the same that they consult with your principall facto^{rs} in the said Islandes before they buy anie Currans of the Greekes, and if they will furnish vs soe good and cheape as the Greekes we will buie of them or howsoever observe their direction in buieing of the Greekes, provided wee may receive noe preiudice thereby, but for the time of shipping wee suppose your orders intend not to limit or restraine vs therein, neither can wee submitt thereto without extreame preiudice for that our shipp or shippes arrive at vncertaine times, and wee conceive our libertie therein can doe your Companie noe preiudice, our proportion being soe small that what time soe euer of the yeere wee lade, obserueing the promised good correspondencie with your facto^{rs} there which wee intend to doe sincerely, it cannott enhannc the price of that Commodity. Concerning your demannd of the arrerages of 4¹¹ per centum since the lordes order to bee paid vnto you according to the tenour thereof, It is impossible for vs now to collect the same, thirteene yeeres being expired since the date thereof, and many men dead¹ which Imported the Commodity. Wee presume if you had given a legall deputation to any one here to demannd and receiue the same It would have beene paid, but for the future we are willing to pay it to such person as you shall please to depute for Collecting it. And wee desire to retaine all good Correspondence with you. Thus Recommending vnto you our due respect Wee Committ you to god and doe Continue

Your verie loueing and respectiue friendes

Humfrie Hooke	Richard Longe
John Barker	Giles Elbridge
Andrew Charlton	Thomas Colston

Bristoll 23th June 1632

To the Right *Worshipfull* Sir Hugh Hamersley Knight governor of the Companie of marchantes trading the Levant seas and the rest of that societie in London *Book of Trade, pp. 210, 211*

¹ *dead* above the line

439. 1664-65 *Treasurer's Account**November 17th 1665*

By monys payd Sir John Knight by order of the hall the 23th
of August last, For his Jurny to London and expences and Charges
about the Curran^{ts} busines .

018 13 00

Treasurer's Book II, 20

440. 23 May 1666

Att the Court at Whitehall.

the 23th of May 1666

The Kings Most Excellent Maiestie.

His Royall Higness the Duke of Yorke

Lord Chancellor

Lord Treasurer

Earle of Berkshire

Earle of Bathe

Earle of Craven

Earle of Lauderdaill

Lord Bishopp of London

Lord Viscount Fitzharding

Lord Arlington

Lord Berkeley

Lord Ashley

Mr Vice Chamberlain

Mr Secretary Morice

Mr Chancellor of the Dutchy

Sir William Coventry

The matter in difference betweene the Governo^r and Company
of Merchantes of London tradeing to the Levant Seas touching
their Complaint against the Merchantes of Bristoll that trade to
Zante yet refuse to beare share of Impositions layd vpon the said
Traders, being this day brought to a hearinge according to an
order of the 25th of Aprill last, Vpon full debate of all pretentions
which were offered either by the Merchantes themselues or
Councell learned on both sides and deliberate consideracion
therevpon. It was Resolved and accordingly It is hereby Ordered
(his Maiestie present in Councell) That henceforward noe imposition
be layd vpon or demannded by the said Governo^r and Company
of Merchantes of London tradeing to the Levant Seas from any
the Merchantes of Bristoll who doe or shall Trade to Venice or
Zante for the comodities of those places only. And all partyes
are dismissed from further attendance at this Board in that
behalf

Edw. Walker

Book of Trade, p. 257¹

¹ This is a copy of the Privy Council minutes. It is one of a group of documents concerning the renewed dispute with the Levant Company. The merchants of Bristol had won for the time being, but the Levant Company continued the struggle.

441. 1 December 1669

To the kings most Excellent Majestie
And the Right honourable the Lords of
his most honourable Privie Councill.

Presented by Sir Richard
Alesworth¹ December 1 1669

The humble petition of the Societie of merchants of the Citty
of Bristoll

Sheweth.

Whereas by your maiesties order of Councill of the 3^d vltimo the Governo^r and 2 or 3 of the Turkye Company were required to attend the board the 17th following, Your Maiestie then appoynting that tyme to take the whole busines betweene your Peticoners and the said Company into consideration, Whereupon although they appeared Yett in as much as the then settleing of the new Sheriffs tooke vp that day, the sayd Governo^{rs} being duely served with the said Order ought to haue attended the next, which hee did not nor since, notwithstanding the Persons concerned on the behalfe of your Peticoners haue soe done in obedience to that your Maiesties Order, hoping to have ere this received your Royall result therein, not that their Charters Confirmacion (for their restauracion to that trade into the Levant they canot now Exercise in regard of the restriccions thereon and the Capittulacons of peace made with the Grand Signior only for that Company) will be of soe great advantage to your peticoners As to your Maiestie and this your kingdome By the raising of your Revenue of Customes, The inlarging of your Cloathing trade The advanceing the price of Wool And setting the poore att work much more then now, as by the reasons herevnto annexed will appeare, The Cloathiers now makeing Complaint of the great mischeife that attendes their bringing vp their Cloathes to Blackwell Hall and the sole contraccions of the trade of Cloath for beyond seas (viz^t) Turky and Hambrough² etc. to the Citty of London only, for that they being

¹ Elsworth.

² The Hamburg Company (the Merchant Adventurers of England) was supporting the Levant Company in this dispute. Charles I's Charter to the Bristol Society in 1643, granted at a time when London was in rebellion, had expressly thrown open to Bristolians the areas normally monopolized by the Merchant Adventurers of England and by the Levant Company. This Charter had been exemplified by a Charter of 23 June, 1665, but apparently the Bristol merchants were unable to make good their rights under these charters. The Hamburg Company offered to admit Bristolians on taking the freedom and paying 20 marks; the Levant Company for £25 a man. *Cal. S.P.D. 1668-69*, p. 559. The Bristol merchants refused the offer. *P.R.O.*, S.P.29/268, no. 78(1).

to pay their spinsters and weavers etc weekly or that they would want bread, they canot many tymes in 2 or 3 monethes sell a Cloath by reason of the merchants designe in forbearing to buy that soe they may bee driven of necessityes sake to sell off their Cloathes at the cheaper or att such prizes as the merchantes themselves will be pleased to give for the same, many tymes for less then they stood them out of purse, soe that severall Cloathiers of very considerable stocke haue of late yeares, as your Peticoners are informed, left of that their trade rather then they would run such hazards and inconveniencyes. Whereas could your Peticoners reap the benefitt and fruit of their charters by the removeall of the said restriccons and inlarging the Cappitulacons aforesaid, it would give the Cloathier due encouragement to continue on, if not sett vpp anew that his trade, for that if they could not sell in London, they might offer them to sale at Bristoll, And the merchantes of London too would not haue such opertunity as now to forbear buying of intent to beat down their price when brought home vnto them, least when they have occasion to buy, the flux of vent thereof being at Bristoll, they might bee necessitated to haue them from thence at the second hand.

May it therefore please your Maiestie of your princely prudence and goodnes (the said Turkey Company not attending you as required) to afford your peticoneres the fruite and benefitt if not the confirmacion of their Charters for their trading into the Levant etc. by your Gracious takeing off the said restriccons on and inlarging the said Capittulacons for their Exercising of their trade as desired. And in hopes thereof they humbly lay themselves prostrate at your majesties feete

And your peticoners shall ever pray etc.

Praying A¹ Confirmation of that Charter.

P.R.O., S.P. 29/268, no. 78²

LONDON MERCHANTS AND SHREWSBURY COTTONS.

20 FEBRUARY 1620³

442. *In a letter to Mr Guy on 10 February 1620, the Society first of all asked him to try to persuade the Council to accept the sum of*

¹ Followed by a deletion.

² For the arguments put forward by Bristol, see p. 19, no. 22.

³ For further details of attempts by Londoners to get control of this trade, see *Acts of the Privy Council, 1613-1614*, pp. 9, 34-40, 51, 198, 310, 351; *Cal. S.P.D. 1619-1623*, p. 274. The trade was eventually thrown open. *Acts of the Privy Council, 1621-1623*, p. 264; *Statutes of the Realm*, iv, part ii, 1218.

£250 which it had offered as that year's contributions to the expedition against the Turkish pirates. The letter then continues as follows:

And concerning the vncivill practizes and projectes of some marchantes of London which you advertize vs are nowe in hand to obteyne the sole exportacion of Shrowsbury Cottons and ymportacion of Raisinges in that Porte Restraining all other his Maiesties subiectes, Wee doe not soe much admire their unreasonable and oppressing attemptes as Reioyce in the Confidence and assurance of their repulse and disgrace from Righte honourable Lordes of his maiesties privie Counsell whoe will never entertaine or admitt such oppression. Neverthelesse wee doe most thanckfully approve and Commend your vertuous Resolucion to oppose and Crushe in the shell these cacatrisises, prayeng you to persevere therein during your necessary residence in London, and if occasion shall require wee will intreate some other of our Society to builde vppon your foundation when your busines shall call you home. It were superfluous to remember you that these dissignes are Contrary to the lawes of the kingdome, the benefitt of the Comon wealth, the increase of his Maiesties Customes, humane society, yea against the Rules of Christianity. Therefore wee doubt not but they will vanishe and become frustrate. In which Confidence being some what Comforted with loving Remebrance of our Right hartie salutacion, wee comitt you to god and Remyne

Your very Loving and Respectfull frindes

John Gonning

Andrew Charlton

master of the Company

Willm Jones

John Whitson

Richard Holworthie

Humfry Browne

Tho: Wrighte

John Barker

Richard Long

John Langton

John Locke

John Tomlinson

Bristoll the xth of Feb 1619

Book of Trade, p. 70

THE LONDON VINTNERS¹

443. Mr Griffen

By your letter Wee vnderstand that the marchantes and vintners

¹ For an account of the Wine Project and its repercussions, see André Simon, *The Wine Trade in England*, iii, 42-58. Certain London vintners, including Alderman William Abell, together with some merchants, had farmed from the king a new duty of 40s. a ton on wine. Agents of the group made arrangements with the Society by which the Society collected the money in Bristol in return for £500 a year. When the project came under fire in the Long Parliament, the Society maintained that it had made the agreement under pressure and to avoid worse evils. See *Book of Trade*, pp. 242, 245, 249, 252-254; *Hall Book I*, 2, 29, 41.

of London had a purpose to bee petitioners that noe French wines bee this yeere ymported into London till the First of December. Wee approue verie well of their resolucions And desire if they proceed That itt may bee generall for all Portes. It wilbee a good meanes for the venting of the great quantities in the land And will bringe in better and cheaper wyne with lesse leekadge, And not a Tonne the lesse ymported and vented in the kingdome next yeere. Wee are carefull to send vpp more moneis vnto you as soone as they can bee gotten in. It is here reported none of the outportes (saue Bristoll) have paid in any moneis. If itt be true may bee a iust cause That men are somewhat slow here in their paimentes ; besides this place never suffered as this yeere, hauing verie great quantities vppon their handes both of French and Spanishe sellinge dailie att miserable low rates to their great losse, The vintners here takeing of lesse quantities from the marchant then heretofore they vsed, Soe that their vndertakeing for the vintners abroad and selling soe little att home falls heauie vppon the merchantes of this Port.

And thus with our hartie salutacions Doe Rest

Bristoll 29 Aug 1639

To Mr George Griffen

marchant these

In London

Your assured *loving* Friendes

Humfrey Hooke

Andrew Charlton

Rich Longe

Book of Trade, p. 245

444. 27 January 1640

Woorshipful and our worthie Friendes

Wee haue received yours of the 16th and before this Three others. You may well Admire our long silence, yett desire you not to take itt as a neglect, our delay was onlie to haue had our answere accompanied with money in which wee habe vsed all Dilligence, But cannot prevaile, the marchantes who have trusted the Country Vintners by meanes of their small Vent Are badlie paid, besides great quantities of the last yeeres wines vppon their handes which with their badd sales falls soe heauie that they crave a little more patience. Wee hope in the close and that as speedilie as wee may wee shall give you content, which is our hartie Desire : wee have laboured by all faire meanes with some, But have noe successe. Therefore Are constrained to certifie against them, because they plainlie denie the paiment of that Dutie of 40^s per tonne on their

wines. Their names Are herevnder written. And thus with our hartie salutations Doe Rest

Your assured *Loving* Friendes

Alex : James	Francis Creswicke	Humph Hooke
Giles Elbridge	Tho : Colston	Jn ^o Tomlinson
Rich : Aldworth	Tho : Hooke	Andrew Charlton
		Rich Longe

Bristoll : 27 January 1639

Wee Desire to bee respited from certifieing till our next which shalbee speedilie.

To the *Woorshipful* o^r *loving* Friendes

Willm Abell Alderman and Mr George Griffith merchant in London

445. 1642

Book of Trade, p. 249

The aunswere given vnto the Committee of the Parliament howse about the Dutie of 40^s per tonne vppon wines presented by p. 253 Mr FitzHerbert etc

To the Honourable Committee of the howse of Commons in Parliament concerning the 40^s per tonne vppon Wynes

The annswere of the Company of marchant Adventurers of the Cittie of Bristoll humblie shewing the truth of their case concerning the new Dutie of 40^s per tonn latelie ymposed on them

That in September 1638 being about a yeere after that ymposicion was laid vppon wynes, the Company of Vintners of London whoe had farmed the same sent vnto Bristoll 5 or 6 of their Members, whereof one was a pretended Messenger and armed with his Maiesties proclamacion and letteres From the lordes of his Maiesties Privie Counsell and other instruccions, Requiringe the Marchantes and vintners of Bristoll To submitt unto the payment of the said duty and to be subject and conforme to such orders and government therein as by the Companie of vintners of London should bee proposed.

To which purpose The said vintners commanded the sighte of All wines that were then in the custodie, either of the marchantes or vintners of Bristoll, And tooke a particuler of the seuerall quantities and quallities thereof, And therevppon Demanded paiement of 40^s per tonne on all the wynes they had sould From Midsomer before vntill that time, Demanndinge and Requiringe the like for the future, And to that end Appointed a collector in Bristoll to Receive the said Dutie And to keepe account of All wines sould and Delivered there.

That the Marchantes of Bristoll therevppon endeavoured all lawfull meanes to Free themselves thereof, But haueing attended

the Counsell Table neere 8 weekes to their great charge in opposing the paiment of the said Duty And haueing for aboue 14 yeeres space before Beene vexed with manie suites and troubles occasioned by projectors and projectes of this nature wherein the said Company and particuler Marchantes of Bristoll Haue expended aboue 1000¹¹, And Findinge noe meanes of Releife were for their peace and to preserve themselves From Ruine Enforced with other partes of the kingdome to accept of such condicions as the Company of Vintners of London proposed, which were That the Company of marchantes of Bristoll should collect the said Dutie of 40^s per tonne in Bristoll and the Members neere adioyninge for the vse of the Company of vintners of London To bee accomptable vnto them yeerelie for what should bee soe Received, Defalkinge 500¹¹ per annum intended for labour, badd¹ wines, losses and the like, and with libertie to bee Freed of this contract vpon the condicions mencioned in the Agreement concerning the same now Remayning with Mr Peard.²

That the Companie of Marchantes of Bristoll in Pursuance of the said agreement vsed their best endeavor to collect the said 40^s per tonne, But found all men soe backward in paiment thereof that they find by the collectors *account* onlie the summe of 1096¹¹ p. 254 13^s 4^d Received, whereof 800¹¹ is paid to Alderman Abell and the Companie of Vintners of London And the Remainder is in the collectors handes Readie to bee paid as the same shalbee ordered.

That great parte of the wyne ymported by the Marchantes of Bristoll were there sould to vintners of the Citty, which are onlie Twelue in number that haue licence to Draw wines, whereof sixe since this new ymposicion failed in their estates in so much that noe one pennie of the said Dutie could ever bee Received of them

That the Marchantes of Bristoll att thend of the First yeere wherein this Duty was to bee collected not findinge sale for their wines Had in their handes aboue 450 tonnes of French wines by which they lost neere 4000¹¹, besides their great losses by their Spanishe wyne and by the faileing of the said vintners.

Theis Reasons with the Decay of trade and losse by Sea caused the said Marchantes of Bristoll to desire the Company of Vintners of London to Release them of their contract and to take *account* of what moneis were Received which the vintners of London refused, And Findinge one of the Bristoll marchantes in London caused him to bee arrested and to putt in Baile for his appearance

¹ Followed by *debts* struck through.

² Chairman of the Committee for Monopolists which was examining the wine project. *Journals of the House of Commons*. ii, 415, 5 February, 1642.

att the Councell Table where hee could not bee Discharged Till hee had promised conformitie to the paiment of the said Dutie and that hee would likewise endeavor to collect the arrerages thereof.

That the Bristoll Marchantes not being able to collect the said arrerages the Company of Vintners of London commenced a suite against them in his Maiesties Court of Exchequer for not Doeing the same which is yett Dependenge, For Releife wherein The Bristoll marchantes were humble Petitioners to the Honourable howse of commons where their petition Remaines with the Committee of Grievances.

This being the condicon and truth of the case of the Company of marchantes of Bristoll They humblie pray that they may onlie pay the Remainder of the said 1096¹¹ 13^s 4^d they haue Received of the said dutie, And that they may bee discharged of the said vnjust suite brought against them in the Exchequer by Alderman Abell and the rest of the Company of Vintners, And that the said contract may bee made void.¹

Book of Trade, pp. 253, 254

*THE MERCHANT ADVENTURERS OF ENGLAND:
PROPOSAL BY THE BRISTOL MERCHANTS AND
COMMENTS BY THE NEWCASTLE MERCHANT
ADVENTURERS²*

446. The copie of Mr Rushworth his second letter.

To the honoured Christopher Nicolson, Esq^r., Marchant in Newcastle

¹ The House of Commons did not consider the Bristol merchants were quite as innocent as this suggests, and the two Bristol M.P.s, Humphrey Hooke and Richard Longe, who were members of the Society and members of a group of twelve that had organized the collection, were expelled from the House as Beneficiaries in the Wine Project. *Journals of the House of Commons*, ii, 415, 567 (12 May, 1642).

² The two letters printed below are from the Records of the Merchant Adventurers of Newcastle, and were included in F. W. Dendy, *Extracts from the Records of the Merchant Adventurers of Newcastle-upon-Tyne* (Surtees Soc., vol. ci, 1899), ii, 136-138. At this time, the Merchant Venturers of Bristol had come in conflict with the Levant Company, and, to a lesser extent, with the Hamburg Company, over the Charter of 1643 which gave Bristolians the right to trade in the areas of the Levant and Hamburg Companies. The Bristolians appealed to the Newcastle Merchant Adventurers for help. The Newcastle Society, unlike the Bristol Society, was to some extent a branch of the Merchant Adventurers of England and had a share in its monopoly. The Newcastle branch had come in conflict with the main Company, and this no doubt led Bristol to hope that it would get support. However, Newcastle, although it had its grievances, suspected the motives of the Bristol merchants, and in any case was not prepared to join in an attack on a monopoly in which it had a share. For conflicts between the Merchant Adventurers of England and the various provincial branches, see E. Lipson, *Economic History of England*, 1947, ii, 254 ff.

Sir,

Since my last unto you that after a great search, your attorney beeing long since deade, Mr Waterhouse found the disclaimer entered upon record, there hath beene a bussines concerneing the Marchants of Bristoll depending before the King and Counsell, between them and the Marchants Adventurers of London, occationed upon a report from the Committee of trade; and yesterday he that prosecuted for the citie of Bristoll shewed me an order of Counsell, wherein it is mentioned that the out ports should likewise make their application as well as Bristoll against the Hambrough Companie. I tolde the party that brought me the order I would acquainte the Company of Marchants Adventurers of Newcastle, whose patent had precedency to that of London, with the said order att his request, but that I did not finde by the said order that they were required to appeare before the King and Counsell; to which hee replyed that now was the time for Bristoll, Exeter, and Newcastle to free themselves from the bondage off the Marchants Adventurers of England (as he called them). Now give me leave to tell you my present thoughts, that this gentleman doth hope by the concurrence of the out ports, to bee at soe much the lesse charge in the Port of Bristoll, by the assistance of other ports and therefore I refferr it to your wisdome whether you will lett them goe allone, and save that charge, or according to the intention in this order joyne strength together. Noething can be done herein till after Christmas, therefore consult with Mr Recorder, and Mr Stot; and what you shall thinke fitt to be done hereupon, lett me receive your instructions. Who hath your papers, or where they are that were formerly made use off, I doe not know. As for the disclaimer hinted in my last, Mr Waterhouse, my very good friend, this day sends me word, that your attorny, if he had beene liveing, might enter judgement upon it, without moveing the court, as a thing of course, but hee being dead, he adviseth to take advice what is fitt to be done. Thus much I thought necessary to impart unto you. Desireing to heare from you with what conveniency you can, I am, Sir,

Your humbe servant,

Exeter House,
December the 7th 1669.

Jo: Rushworth

The answer to the abovesaid letter is as ffolloweth:—

Mr Rushworth,

Sir,—Wee have yours of the 7th December, together with a

copie of an order of the Counsell table, touching the Marchants of Bristoll, and the out ports, to bring them into the privileged of the Marchants Companie without beeing lyable to pay their debts, and that it may be considered how the senate of Hambrough may be treated with, that those new traders may have the privilege of that cytie, as the other companie, which if effected will ruine the Marchants Companie ; who by their stock, trade, and credite has beene the support of our English manufactures. And in this weighty case it is not easy to determine what to doe ; for although the Marchants Adventurers have dealt very unkindly with us (to give it noe worse tearme) and put us to very much and needlesse charge. (If they would have done us that right wee allwayes had from their prediceors, which has cost us ten tymes the worth of what we contend for) yett in this case wee doe hold it more conducing to the common good of trade, and the maintayninge of our generall privileges to ioyn with the Marchants of London, rather then with these interlopers ; and thereupon wee would desire you to be very carefull to know what passeth at the Counsell table, and at the Committee for trade, concerning those of Bristoll and the out ports, and to advise us from time to tyme how things goe, to the end if neede be we may, as much as in us lyes, oppose the liberty intended them, or that they expecte to have granted. And alsoe wee would desire that you and Mr Hartlibb would take some convenient time to sound the Governor of the Marchants what they expecte from us. If wee can helpe by petitioning with them, or for them, wee shall perhaps be redily drawne to it, notwithstanding our former differences (but without charge—that is always intended), that wee might have noe further trouble, butt enjoy our ancient and undoubted privileges. And if you finde them desirous of it, if Yorke and Hull will doe the like, wee shall joyne our force against those enimies of our trade, and this wee leave to your prudent managment.

As to the papers you mention, you have them all. Soe pray lett them be diligently sought for and carefully preserved till wee neede them. And haveing not further, wee rest, Sir,

Your loveing friends the Governor, etc.

Newcastle, the 24 December 1669.

*Extracts from the Records of the Merchant Adventurers
of Newcastle, Surtees Society, vol. 101, pp. 136-138.*

THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

447. 21 February 1650

East India
Company¹

Whereas there was a letter directed to the Master and Company of this Society, from the East India Company in London, intimating that it shalbe lawfull for this Society to put in any summe or summes of money into Joynt stocke with them to be employed in the said trade, The said letter was this day read in Courte, And the said businesse referred to a vote, Wherevpon it was considered by the Company that the said proffer may prove noe way beneficiall to this Company, And it was voted that a lettere of thanckes shalbe returned to the said East India Company.²

Hall Book I, 151

448. 12 October 1681

Also voted (nemine contradicente) that this society ioyne with the Turkey company and other merchants of London³ (in an addresse) that wee may be concerned in the East India trade with the East India company of London.

Hall Book II, 184

449. 10 November 1691

Comittee for the
gaining a parte
in the India
trade

Voted that the present master and wardens and the new master and wardens, Sir Thomas Earle, Mr William Jackson, Mr Robert Yate, Mr Thomas Scrope, Mr John Cary, Mr John Yeamans senior and Mr Charles Jones or any Five of them be a Committee to consider and draw upp a petition with reasons and instructions for gaining a part of the East India trade to this Citty. And they are desired to meete twice a weeke in our Hall or some other convenient place about it and to invite to their assistance all other merchants and traders of this Citty or the adiacent Counties that

¹ Marginal note in a different hand from the extract.

² For this offer, which was made to thirteen ports, see *A Calendar of the Court Minutes of the East India Company, 1650-1654*, edit. Ethel Bruce Sainsbury, Oxford, 1913, p. 30. Only Bristol and Exeter answered the letter, and both rejected the offer. In 1650 there were several East Indian joint stocks. The one in question here appears to be the United Stock for which it was hoped to raise £300,000. It is true that the East India Company was faced by a number of difficulties at the time (see W. R. Scott, *Joint Stock Companies*, II, 120 ff.), but Bristol nevertheless lost her opportunity.

³ For the Levant Company's prolonged and ultimately unsuccessful attack on the East India Company, see W. R. Scott, *Joint Stock Companies*, I, 308; II, 139-143. In 1681 a project was on foot to promote a rival company, but the attack failed.

will contribute to so good a designe And any member of the Hall may (if he pleaseth) be present at such meetings.¹

Hall Book II, 482

450. 17 November 1691²

About East India concerne and the Mollosses etc mett 17^o November 1695.

Mr William Swymmer	Mr Wiillam Jackson
Mr Jacob Beele	Mr Robert Yate
Mr Robert Kirke	Mr Thomas Scrope
p' Mr John Cooke	p' Mr John Cary
p' Mr Henry Gibbs	p' Mr John Yeamans senior
p' Mr Edward Jones	p' Mr Charles Jones
Sir Thomas Earle	

when and where were also present

Mr William Donning

Mr Arthur Hart

Mr Richard Codrington and Edward Hackett

And then they agreed on the following petition and letter.

To the Honourable the House of Commons now assembled att Westminster

The humble Peticion of the master wardens assistants and comalty of the incorporated society of merchants adventurers within the citty of Bristoll and of diverse other merchants and traders in and nere the same Citty.

Humbly sheweth

That your Peticioners understanding there wilbe a new establishment of an East India company more generall and advantageous to their Maiesties and the nations interest then the former And inasmuch as this Citty is next to London for trade and commerce and capable to fitt out shippes to and from the Indies and to exporte and vend here the comodities thence imported

Wee your said Peticioners doe therefore humbly pray this Honourable House that wee may be interested in the intended new established East India company and have the benefitt of

¹ At this time there seemed some prospect that the East India Company might be reorganized. For the attack on it, see *Journals of the House of Commons*, x, 541, 563.

² Followed by a deletion.

fitting out shippes to the East Indies and importing goods from thence.

And wee your Petitioners etc

John Cooke master
Henry Gibbs } wardens
Edward Jones }

Hall Book II, 487

451. 18 November 1691¹

Bristol the 18 November 1691

Sirs

Yesterday the Committee mett att merchants hall relating to the affaires of trade and agreed to draw up a Petition for obtaining an interest in the East India Company and the benefitt of the export of shippes and import of goods from thence to this Citty. Inclosed comes the said Petition which wee send up for your approbacion subjecting the same to addicion or allteracion as in your prudence shall seem fitt. When thus digested please to deliuer itt to the Honourable House of Commons and endeavour to make interest with the members of our adjacent Countys to obtain their favour to forward the same. Wee are sensible the Wealthy Citizens of London who have hetherto ingrosted this profitable trade to themselves will make great head against us, soe wee intend (if you approve thereof) to appoint one or two members of our hall to come vp prepared with reasons for our having the Petition granted. These members will attend you for advice and assistance in this affaire and in other matters of trade to which wee doubt not your favourable concurrence, meantime wee² request may heare from you and be in some measure directed for our government.

Wee are Sir

Your Loving Freinds and humble servants

John Cooke Master
Henry Gibbs } Wardens
Edward Jones }

Hall Book II, 488

¹ The letter was presumably to the M.P.s Sir Richard Hart and Sir John Knight.

² Followed by *give* struck through.

452. 11 October 1692

The Committee for procuring a share in a New East India Company is revived.

Committee
about East
India Company
revived

Hall Book II, 502¹

AFRICAN COMPANY

453. 10 November 1690

Ordered that Mr William Swymmer, Mr Giles Merrick, Sir William Hayman, Mr William Donning, Mr Robert Yate, Mr John Cary, Sir William Merrick, Mr Peter Saunders and Mr William Daines or the major number of them are appointed forthwith to consider of a proper petition to the Parliament for letting in the merchants of this Citty to a share in the African trade.²

Hall Book II, 461

454. 10 December 1694

To the Honourable the Commons of England assembled in Parliament

The Humble petition of the Merchants and Traders of the City of Bristoll Touching the Trade to the Coast of Affrica.

Sheweth. That your petitioners are very sensible that a free trade to the Coast of Affrica will carry off much greater quantities of English manufactories and imploy greater numbers of the poore of this Kingdome then when the same is confined to a particuler Company; and that it will render the product of that Country much more plenty and consequently much cheaper, the scarcenesse and dearenesse of said goods tending very much to the decay of trade and ruine of greate numbers of Artificers and Tradesmen workeing and dealeing therein, and their Maiesties plantacions in the West Indies not so well supplied with negroes.

Your petitioners Doe therefore humbly pray that the said Trade to Affrica may not be carryed on by a Joynt stock or a select number of men, whereby their maiesties subiects will loose their

¹ There are no further references in the *Hall Book*.

² The Royal African Company was being attacked from many quarters. A Bill for securing the Trade to Africa to the Royal African Company was read a second time on 21 April, 1690. There were petitions against it from the clothiers of Suffolk and Essex, the London Barbary merchants, the planters and traders to Jamaica, the city of Exeter and the cutlers of Hallamshire. *Journals of the House of Commons*, x, 382, 449, 459.

liberty in that trade, But by such other regulacions as in your greate wisdomes shalbe thought most meete

Tho Day maior

Sam :¹ Price master of the society
of merchants etc

W^m Clutterbuck

W^m Jackson

W^m Swymmer etc

Hall Book III, 22

455. 10 December 1694

Bristoll the 10th December 1694.

Mr Cary¹

Yours of the 5th instant (to William Swymmer) Came to hand in due time to Advise that you were earnestly solicited by the London Merchants to desire us to ioyn with them in opposing the African Company in getting that trade Exclusive of all others. Wee could not conveniently forward our Peticion² to the Parliamt last post, but send itt you here inclosed, and desire you to act as heartily as you can, that the Company may not obteyne A Charter soe much to the prejudice of the trade of this Kingdome, And for your charge you need not question being reimbursed, haveing soe many subscribers and the master intends to call a Hall this weeke, wee are, Sir,

Your Humble servants

If the petition sent you be not to the London Merchants liking, please to send downe A Copy of what they would have and it shall be forwarded by the next post after its receipt.

Sam.¹ Price

Wm Swymmer

Hall Book III, 23

456. 12 December 1694

Bristoll the 12 December 1694.

Sirs

Wee heerwith send you a Copy of a petition which (in regard could not have A hall by reason of the Masters indisposition) we sent to Mr John Cary who will Apply to you, and wee earnestly desire you will use your utmost endeavo.^{rs} that wee may not by meanes of any Company or otherwise be denied the benefitts of

¹ John Cary then acting as the Society's agent in London.

² The petition can be found in *Hall Book III, 22*.

the African trade which is soe great importance to this City in particuler as well as other places of this Kingdome. This wee earnestly recommend to you and with our humble service remaine

Your obliged humble servants

To Sir Richard Hart and

Sir John Knight¹

Samuel Price

Richard Crumpe

John Swymer

W^m Swymmer

Hall Book III, 25

457. 17 May 1698

A Committee was set up to petition Parliament against an intended imposition on sugar.

Alsoe to drawe another Petition to the house of Lords against the passing the Affrican bill² and they are desired to meete too morrow by eight a Clock in the morning in the upper Councell house in order to the draweing of the same And then the same Committee to follow such methods by writeing to our members in Parliament and employing Councell and sollicitors as they shall thinke fitt, And the charges incident thereabouts to be borne by our Hall.

Hall Book III, 122

¹ M.P.s for Bristol.

² For this petition, see *MSS. of the House of Lords*, 1697-9, iii, 245. By the Bill, any one might trade to Africa, but traders were subject to a tax of 10 per cent. on goods exported and imported, to be used for the maintenance of the Company's forts. Bristol asked for the trade in negroes to be completely free from Cape Blanco to Angola. The petition was not successful and the bill became law (1698).

XIII. PROTECTION OF THE MERCHANTS' INTERESTS

Protection of the interests of its own members in particular, and of the merchant community in general, was one of the main functions of the Society in the seventeenth century, and a considerable number of illustrations of this work have been given in earlier pages. The purpose of this section is to provide further examples of a work which covered a very wide field, ranging from resistance to royal commissioners to requests for a more efficient postal service, and from petitions for enforcement of the navigation acts to demands that white soap should not be manufactured from any material except olive oil.

The points at issue were many and varied, and here it is possible to give only a small selection of the documents. The extracts have been chosen to show the range of the Society's activities rather than to illustrate the history of any particular dispute. To explain adequately the background in each case would require more space than is available, but reference has been made to some of the issues in the Introduction; and in the footnotes an effort has been made to elucidate some of the points to which the documents refer.

458. AGREEMENT CONCERNING PURVEYANCE¹

the seaventh daie of May anno 1605

This yeere (after much debateinge vpon the cause of Purveyance for his maiesties houshold by certeyne Commissioners in that behalfe appointed), The Companie of merchauntes of this Citty (in defence of the Priviledges of the same) first withstanding to serve the Kinges houshold with wines at such prices as the Londoners are bounde to doe, and afterwarde consenting to serve the same (soe as the kinge bee within certeyne myles² of Bristoll) at such prices as the same shalbee appraised at by indifferent men

¹ Disputes over purveyance of wine and grocery for the king's household took up a good deal of the merchants' time and money up to 1640, and this is but one illustration from a large number of references in the Society's records. See *Book of Trade*, pp. 120-122, 133-136, 138, 140, 176-179, 181-183, 195. There is an account of the disputes in J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, 112-116.

² Twenty miles. The agreement was not made till 1609.

according to the Statute in that case provided: His maiestie beinge at Woodstocke, there was taken vpp in Bristoll by one John Dumbloe his maiesties Purveyo^r Fiftie one hogsheades of Gascoigne Wyne, appraised at xiiij^l x^s per tonne, and tenne buttes of seckes appraised at xiiij^l per butt, The somme whereof being 314^l 7^s 6^d was paide vnto the perticuler Owners of the saide goodes out of money then borrowed of the Chamber of Bristoll;¹ whoe was repaide againe by the Societie of Marchantes of this Citty out of the wharfadge money ymposed on their goodes and marchandises and is to bee receyved of the kinges maiestie when his highnes shall bee pleased to appointe the same:

Book of Charters I, 33

459. PROTEST AGAINST THE IMPOSITION ON SWEET WINES, 1608²

The Companies letter to Mr Parry exhibiting a petition to the Lord Treasurer for the freeinge of them from the ymposicions³

Bristoll the xjth of October 1608

Mr Parry

it may please you to vnderstand, that haveing pervsed the newe booke of rates lately sett out, wee finde ourselves Coupled in paymentes, vppon sweet wyne, with unequall yoke fellowes of London and South Hampton by reason that wee doe pay prisadge⁴ vppon sweet wyne which neither of them pay. Wherefore wee have thoughte good to addresse our petition to our honourable good Lord the Lord highe Treasouro^r of England which wee doe send you herein⁵ closed prayeng you to followe the same in our names with effect, not doubting but that his *Lordship* haveing vnderstood our reasons therein, will bee a meanes that wee shall bee freed, as well from the Newe Ymposicion as alsoe Composicion, whereof

¹ For a detailed account of the sums paid, see Bristol Record Office: *Mayors Audits*, 04026(16), pp. 182-184.

² This is one illustration of the opposition of Bristol merchants to the various duties imposed on wine by James I and Charles I. These disputes between 1608 and 1640 have left a considerable mark on the merchants' records. See *Book of Trade*, pp. 47, 48, 120, 121, 124-130, 134-138, 149-151, 154-157, 176-177, 233-236: There is an account of the disputes in J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, 114-119, and in André Simon, *The Wine Trade in England*, iii, 9 ff. For the Wine Project, see p. 221 ff.

³ Heading in a different hand from the copy of the letter.

⁴ One tun in every ten tuns, taken by the Crown at less than the market price.

⁵ Followed by *in* struck through.

the Last Lord Treas^{ur}er did free vs as you well knowe, and wee thincke it vnreasonable that other men should bee more free in our owne houses then wee ourselves are. Lett vs therefore intreete your best helpe and furtherance in this busines, and that you will acquainte our good Lord, the Lord of South Hampton and his officers therewith, whoe noe doubt wilbee greatly preiudiced yf wee should bee Compelled to pay theis extraordinary payment and vnexpected ymposicions. Wee pray you cause the petition to bee newlie written, and sett in due forme as it oughte to bee, not altering the substance thereof, and what reasonable charges you shall disburse in the due prosecution thereof, wee will allowe you with thanckes, and thus not doubting of your best endeavors herein, Doe with the Remembrance of our best wishes comitt you to god alwayed resting

Your Lovinge Frindes

Willm Ellis
John Hopkins
John Whitson
Mathew Haviland
Willm Vawre
Robert Aldworth
Abell Kitchen
John Rowbero
Willm Cole

John Boulton
Thomas Aldworth
John Fowens
John Aldworth
Thomas Hopkins
George White
Thomas Pitt
Edw : Morris

To our very Loving Frind Mr Thomas Parry gent' at the three Cupps in Bredstret in London or els where

Book of Trade, p. 47

460. ACTION AGAINST ENGROSSERS

8 October 1611

Alsoe this yeere were certeyne suites prosecuted against engrossers of Ledd the Charge whereof disbursed by this Societie amounted to

ij^{li} xvj^s

Book of Charters I, 45

461. THE IMPOSITION ON SWEET WINES

8 October 1611

This yeere a letter was broughte from the Lord Treasouro^r of England concerninge the leavieng of five shillinges vpon euery tonne of Sweete Wynes brought into this Porte of Bristoll.

In Defence whereof Mr John Whitsone and Mr Thomas James Aldermen weare ymployed, the charges whereof for this yeere was paide out of the generall Stocke and amounted xiiij^l iiij^s ij^d

Book of Charters I, 45

462. 10 October 1612

This yeere Mr Humfrye FitzHarbert is appointed to followe the causes of ymposition of the sweete wynes, the Kings grocer,¹ and for allowance of xx per centum to bee Defalked out of the ymposition of secke,² and to sollicite the Lordes of his maiesties moste honourable privie Counsell therein, the charge whereof for this yeere amounteth to the somme of xxxvij^l xvj^s jd

Book of Charters I, 47

463. 14 October 1613

This yeere the Causes concerninge the ymposition of Sweete Wynes and other things begune the former yeere were yet prosecuted by the saide Mr Humfrie Fitzharbert, whose disbursements therein for this yeare amounted to the somme of xxv^l

Book of Charters I, 49

464. DISPUTE WITH THE CUSTOMS OFFICERS³

November the xvijth day 1623

Alsoe in this yeare in August anno 1624 were elected certeyne Comittées of this Company to attend the Lordes his maiesties Comissioners and to informe them of such exactions of Fees as the officers of this Porte Doe compell the marchantes to pay, And in the meane tyme to conferre with the said Officers and therein to accorde if they may. Vpon which Conferrence after much debating and often meetinge, the Company and officers agreed to take such Fees onely as are mencioned in a certayne writinge vnde hand and seale, interchangably subscribed by the saide Comittées and officers.

Book of Charters I, 96

¹ Regarding purveyance for groceries.

² A claim for allowance for leakage, bad wine, etc.

³ Throughout the century the merchants engaged in a running fight with the Customs Officer and the Searcher, chiefly over fees. See *Book of Trade*, pp. 90-92, 147-149, 218, 220-221, 247-249; *Hall Book I*, 8, 18, 21, 25, 29; *Hall Book II*, 207, 279, 320, 505, 511; *Hall Book III*, 35. See also J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, 119-122.

465. *PROTEST AGAINST ENQUIRY INTO CONCEALED PRIZES, 1635*¹

To the kings most excellent Maiestie

The humble petition of the Marchantes, Owne^{rs} and Victuallers of Shipping Capitaines and Mariners of your Maiesties Cittie of Bristoll and thereabouts

Shewing

That in the late Warres betweene your Maiestie and the kingdomes of Spaine and France, many of your Maiesties said subiectes did by licence of letteres of Mart² furnishe and sett to sea divers shippes of Warre by way of Reprisall to their great charge, Adventuring both their estates their lives and fortunes in the service of your Maiestie and this common wealth, Many of which shippes tooke prizes of good value and paid vnto your Maiestie for Custome and Impost Not soe little as Twentie thowsand poundes sterling, and as much more to the then lord Admirall.

Now soe it is, may it please your Maiestie, That within theis two yeares now last past, John Dowle, Henry Shuter and others, by virtue of a Commission out of your Maiesties Court of Exchequer, have sworne examined and molested your Maiesties said petitioners and many other of your Maiesties loyall subiectes to their great trouble and charge, And have alsoe served them with severall writtes some in your Maiesties Court of Exchequer, at your Maiesties Attorneys suite, and others in the Court of wardes at the duke of Buckinghams suite,³ concerning the same prizes, Contrary to all lawe or president (as your said peticoners are informed) thereby endeavouring to force them to accompt of thinges long since past and out of memory, many of the Capitaines and adventurers of all sortes being since dead, and were they liveing could not give accompt for other mens accions) which tendeth to the great disheartning of all your loyall subiectes, and will detere them for ever hereafter to be adventurers in the like kinde.

It is therefore humblie prayed, That your roiall Maiestie would

¹ In the war at sea (1625-1630), Bristol merchants had fitted out privateers and taken a large number of rich prizes. It is very probable that not all the prize goods were declared, and in 1635 the merchants were greatly embarrassed by an inquiry into concealed prizes (for the depositions made before the Commissioners, see P.R.O., E.95/5319). See also P.R.O., P.C.2/48, pp. 302/3, for charges against Francis Creswicke and Giles Elbridge.

² *Mart* written for *mark* or *marque*.

³ The heir of the Duke of Buckingham who had been assassinated in 1628. His father as Admiral had been entitled to a share in the prizes.

be pleased to commannd the said Dowle and Shuter, and all other persons whatsoever from henceforth to Surcease any further prosecution or molestacion of your most loiall subiectes in any of your Maiesties Courts of Justice.

And your *petitioners* (as in dutie bound) shall dailie pray etc.
At the Court of Whitehall vltimo November 1635

His Maiestie is pleased to referre this¹ Peticion to the Lords Commissioners for the Admiralty who are to call all parties before them whome it doth or may concerne and hauing fully informed themselues of this busines to certify the true state thereof to his Maiesty, who will therupon declare his further pleasure

Fran : Windebank

Endorsed Merchants of Bristoll

R : 8^o December 1635

P.R.O., S.P. 16/302, no. 109

466. *ALLEGED UNLAWFUL EXPORT OF GOODS, 1636²*

To the Righte Honourable the Lords of his Maiesties most Honourable privie Counsell.

The humble Peticion of Hugh Lewis his Maiesties Sercher for the Porte of Bristoll.

Sheweth

That the petitioner (according to the duty of his said office) did lately seize certaine Dickers³ of tanned Hides and Chests of Candles unlawfully shipped from the said Porte intended for forraigne partes, and hath proceeded legally for the recouerie thereof as in such services is required. And the petitioner haveinge likewise an informacion dependinge in the high Courte of Star chamber against sundrey Merchants of Bristoll, as the Farmo^{rs} Deputies for the vnlawfull transportance of very greate quantities of prohibited goodes, of which the petitioner is able to make good proofe

Soe it is, may it please your Lorshipps to bee informed, That

¹ Followed by *Com'* struck through.

² There is a certain amount of evidence which suggests that the Bristol merchants in the sixteen-thirties were not simply the victims of brutal oppression that they made themselves out to be, but that some of them were engaged in practices of very dubious legality. Hugh Lewis was the king's Searcher at Bristol. For further details of this dispute, see *Cal. S.P.D. 1636-1637*, pp. 219, 220; *Cal. S.P.D. 1642-1643*, p. 223. For allegations concerning the merchants' unjust treatment of Lewis at a later date, see J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, pp. 142-143.

³ A bundle of twelve hides.

the nowe Maior and other Cheife Merchants of Bristoll aforesaid beinge owners of the Hides and Candles seized as aforesaid, findinge that the petitioner would not Combine with them to passe and suffer their said goods and others prohibited vnlawefully to be transported as aforesaid, haue not onely splenatically certified your Lordshipps of a manifest vntruth against the petitioner, as by the annexed appeareth, but haue alsoe upon the bare reporte of one Christopher Cary a confederat of theirs in very malicious and disgracefull manner Convented and bound the petitioner to the good behaiour, refuseinge to examine such competent witnessses as the petitioner did offer to produce for the cleareinge of the said Christopher Caryes false report of the petitioner.

Whereby (as alsoe by some former indirecte practises by sundry of the said merchantes of Bristoll) the petitioner and his Deputyes haue byn and still are greatly discouradged and hindred from performinge the services of importance required to be executed by the petitioner and Deputyes; by all which it is manifest his Maiesties service as much as in them lyeth is wounded through the sides of the petitioner.

Wherefore the petitioner most humbly beseecheth your Lordships to be pleased to take the premisses into Consideration and therevpon to giue order that the same may bee examined, the Delinquents punished according to their demerrits, and the petitioner encouradged and supported in the said services (which the said petitioner is by oath and otherwise bound to performe) as in your Lordships greate wisdomes shall seem good.

And as in duty bound the petitioner shall euer pray for your lordships etc

P.R.O., S.P. 16/337, no. 24

467. RESISTANCE TO ROYAL COMMISSIONERS, 1638¹

18 January 1638

Edmund Arundell one of the Wardens of the company of Marchants within the City of Bristoll is found to haue been a willfull contemner of his Maiesties Comission² vnder the greate Seale (amongst other things) in the following perticulers.

¹ The particular interest of this document is the light it throws on the seizure of the Society's records. It also gives a somewhat different picture of the Commissioners' actions from the one usually presented. For the merchants' account of the affair, see P.R.O., S.P. 16/379, no. 1.

² A Commission to inquire into money supposed to be illegally levied by direction of the magistrates since 1603. This probably refers to wharfage and it was most likely the wharfage books that the Commissioners wished to see.

Hee as warden¹ of the sayd Company, doth constantly keepe one key of 3 of a certeine chest standing in the said Marchants Hall wherein (amongst other things, as it is deposed) there ar kept seuerall bookes and accompts specifieng diuers matters examinable by the Comission; yet hath (in like sort as Richard Long the Master and John Goning the *Treasurer* of the sayd Company) refused to assist with his sayd key, for the produceing of the sayd bookes as by the Comission is required; although the sayd Arundell was at Bristoll sundry tymes required by the Comissioners to assist with his sayd key and otherwise for the produceing of the sayd bookes and writeings.

Within a short tyme after the Comissioners had been at the sayd Marchants Hall with their Comission, and there see seuerall matteriall bookes, which they viewed there, and did alsoe leaue them with Richard Griffith there clerke, who by the Comissioners was required to be responsible for them as by the Comission is directed: The said Edmond Arundell came to the sayd Griffith and demannded and gott from him the keyes of the sayd Hall and custody of all the aforesayd bookes; the day before the sayd Griffith was purposely sent to London by the Maior Mr Longe Mr Dyer the Towne clerke, and others of Bristoll, to thend that the Comissioners might not examine him or haue a further sight of the aboue mentioned bookes. By which meanes the Comissioners could not come to a sight of any of those bookes soe that the seruice vpon the Comission was by that meanes more especially thereby greatly hindred.

Neuerthelesse the said Edmond Arundell haueing soe gotten the Custody of the keyes of the Marchants hall and bookes aforesayd was by a speciall warrant from the Comissioners required to assist in produceing the sayd bookes kept at the Marchants hall by Richard Griffith and otherwise, who did refuse to read the sayd warrant neither would he produce the sayd bookes as he was required, but then denied vpon his oath to haue the keyes of the Marchants hall and bookes there kept, which as he hath sithence confessed he receiued of Richard Griffith but two dayes before.

And the sayd Arundell being lately examined heere sought with dilatory vnfitting and maskt answeres to spend the tyme and did at length refuse to² firme or ratifye any of his then examination, discouering that he thereby only intended to diue into the secrets

¹ Warden, 1636-1638.

² *sd* above the line.

³ Followed by a deletion.

of the seruice and then as he did before (before he was rendred to the Messenger) to put a scorne and afront vpon the seruice by refusing to subscribe examination or to giue fitting and direct answers as by the Comission is required.

After this he desired that there might be inserted in his sayd examinations some certaine complaints of the miscarriage of some of the Comissioners at Bristoll, which the Lord Mohun asented vnto, all tendring to some vyolence which he pretends the Comissioners would there haue offered by breaking open of dores etc. Then the Lord Mohun to be satisfied of the truth, demanded of him whether he thought in his conscience that the Comissioners at Bristoll or any of them would haue broken open any dores or chests or vsed any other violence if they had not found purposed opposition to the said seruice¹ if the execution of the sayd seruice. To which he answered, I will giue noe answere therevnto; but haueing discouered (as is before exprest) the secrets of the inquiry and body of busines and haueing therein kept the Comissioners from two of the clock till seuen at night refused to firme his former examination, with a purpose as wee conceiue, to discouer the secrets to the rest of the Bristoll men; wherevpon in care of the trust reposed in vs for his Maiesties seruice wee rendred him to the Messenger for the present, because he would not signe his former examination; And doe humbly pray your² further directions therein.

Long Aker the
xviiith of January 1637

J. Okehampton
Warwicke Mohun
Robte Powlett
Charles Foxe

P.R.O., S.P. 16/379, no. 3

468. BRISTOL M.P.S. TO BE INFORMED OF GRIEVANCES

Grievances to be communicated to the Members in Parliament³

The second Day of Aprill Anno Domini 1640

Att a generall Court houlden this present Day, The Company taking into consideracion their manifold greivances, And hoping for redresse in the Parliament Haue made choice of this Committees herevnder named, That is to say Mr Alderman Charlton Master of this Societie, Mr Alexander James and Mr Francis Creswicke wardens, Mr John Langton Treasurer, Alderman

¹ if they had not found . . . said service inserted above the line.

² Followed by a deletion.

³ Marginal note in a different hand from the extract.

Holworthy, Alderman Longe, Alderman Tayler, Mr Giles Elbridge, Mr Thomas Colston, Mr Miles Jackson, Mr William FitzHerbert and Mr William Cann, And Doe entreate and Desire them or any seaven of them To meete in this Hawle And to consider of meete Instruccion to bee made and Delivered vnto the Burgesses chosen for this Citty And to Intreate them To vse their best eandeaours for redresse, And what the said Committees or any seaven of them shall Doe therein All the whole Company¹ Doe promise to Ratifye allowe and approve of the same. *There follow fifty-six signatures.*

Hall Book I, 23

469. PETITION AGAINST DUTCH TRADERS IN THE WEST INDIES²

7 December 1654

Memorandum That at this Court It is voted and agreed that *p. 256* this Company shall ioyn with the Westcountry merchants in their petitions touching the Dutch trading at Barbadoes and other Cariba Islands and Virginia, And thereupon Mr Joseph Jackson master, Mr Robert Yate, Mr Robert Cann, and Mr William Merrick, *p. 257* Mr Walter Tocknell, Mr John Willoughby, Mr John Knight thelder and Mr Thomas Speed or any fowre of them are appoynted and desired to frame the said petitions and to meet at Five of the Clock too Morrow in the afternoon at the Tolzey to draw up the same petition.

Hall Book I, 256, 257

470. INSTRUCTIONS TO AN M.P. 1660

14 July 1660

p. 303

The Letter written to Mr Knight.

Bristoll. 14th July. 1660

We have received yours of the 10th instant, And doe therein take notice of what you have written touchinge the Calue skinns and butter.³ You well knowe that formerly wee had a pattent for Calve skins, which was taken from vs when wee had Twelve yeeres to come vpon it, vpon which accompt wee conceive that if any pattent bee to bee had, wee have most right to it; And if

¹ Followed by a deletion.

² During the disturbances following the Civil War, the Dutch had secured a considerable part of the British West India trade.

³ See pp. 118-128.

you conceive any such grannte like to be obtained, wee shall then by some members of our hall or by such other course as yow shall advise, make our addresses to procure it ; in the meane time wee desire your care and watchfulnesse that wee be not surprized, And in case yow conceive noe such pattent wilbe grannted, Then wee desire that yow take care that both Calfe Skinns and butter may passe in the Booke of Rates on as easey termes as other comodities doe ; wee cannott at present procure a coppye of the Pattent, butt shall send it you very suddenly. Yow may remember that there is a statute perticularly against transportation of Butter *p.304* and Calve skinns soe that if it bee putt into the booke of rates, care must bee taken to vacate the statute. Touching what yow desire to knowe what was payd to¹ the Clarke of the greene cloth,² formerly the Kings Grocer, by Vertue of his power, did come into mens houses and take what proporcion of goods hee thought fitt, which was a greate greivance to the subject, and caused vs in or about the yeare. 1630. to make a composition for 100 Markes a yeare, which was payd out of the Hall, vntill the troubles began. Wee hope it will not bee Revived, Butt if any such thinge shalbee grannted, Then wee desire yow to make a composicion at the best rate yow cann, by reason Trade is decayed.

Sir, wee vnderstand that the Merchants of London are petitioning against planteing English Tobaccocoe. Wee desire yow to give vs some instructions how wee may Joyne with them in it, (it being a greate hinderance to all trade, as yow well knowe). Alsoe wee thinke good to put yow in mind of the Act for trade,³ and such amendments as yow know fitting to bee therein. The inclosed will give some light of the Pattent. Thus Retorneing yow thanckes for your care and advise,

Wee take leave and Remayne,

Sir your Loveing freinds

John Bowen Master
Henry Creswicke
Joseph Jackson
Robert Cann
John Knight

Hall Book I, 303, 304

¹ To above the line.

² The Board of Green Cloth controlled the royal household.

³ The Navigation Act of 1651.

471. PETITION AGAINST ENGLISH TOBACCO¹

26 February 1662

Memorandum That at this Courte, it is voted, ordered and agreed, That the Company shall petition his Maiestie touching the Virginia trade and suppressinge the English Tobaccoe. And that the charge of six pence per Hogshead formerly agreed on by the Haule vpon Virginia Tobaccoe imported shalbe imployed towards the suppressing of English Tobaccoe and the planting thereof. And that the said six pence per Hogshead shalbe contynued to that vse only. And the ordering thereof was referred to the Committee formerly appoynted for that Businesse the 19th Day of March 1660.

Hall Book I, 337

472. JOINT ACTION WITH LONDON MERCHANTS

13 April 1663

Alsoe at this Courte, Mr Alderman Creswicke, Mr Alderman Knight, Mr Richard Streamer, Mr John Jackson, Mr John Knight, Mr William Lysons and Mr Charles Williams, or any foure of them, are appoynted and aucthorized to consider of the agreivances of the trade of merchandizeing and to joyne with the Merchants of London for redresse of the agreivances of Merchantess. And to answere all Letters sent or which shalbe sent concerning the same.

. . . It is alsoe ordered That Thomas Jefferies be payd Five powndes by the Treasurer for his paynes taken in destroying the English Tobaccoe. And Mr Eusebius Brooke is to haue six powndes for collecting the duety of Virginia Tobaccoe.

Hall Book I, 349

473. ENGLISH TOBACCO

13 October 1664

Memorandum that at this Courte, Sir John Knight knight Master, Sir Henry Creswicke, Sir Robert Yeamans Knightes, Mr John Knight Sherriffe, Mr Robert Vickris, Mr Walter Tocknell and Mr William Willett or any foure of them were voted aucthorized and appoynted to treat with Sir Humphrey Hooke knight late High Sherriffe of the County of Gloucestershire and Phillipp Dorney his late Vndersheriffe touching the summe of Three hundred and two powndes which some of the Members of the Haule stand engaged

¹ For the repeated efforts to suppress the planting of English tobacco, see C. M. MacInnes, *Early English Tobacco Trade*, pp. 94-129.

for touchinge the money disbursed about the distruction of the Englishe Tobaccocoe which was payed vnto and received by the said Philip Dorney as Vndersherriffe to the said Sir Humphrey Hooke And to call them to an accompt for the same. And if occasion require to commence any prosecute any accions or suites either in Common lawe or Channcery touchinge the same.

Hall Book I, 337

474. COMPLAINT ABOUT POSTAGE

9 December 1667

Postage of
Letters¹

That this Society shall make their addresses to the Burgesses of Parliament for this Citty concerning the poste office, And to procure redresses for their extraordinary taxes layed on postage of Letters.²

Hall Book I, 423

475. ATTEMPT TO PROHIBIT THE MAKING OF SOAP WITH MATERIALS OTHER THAN OLIVE OIL, 1669

p. 66 The Copy of the Certificate touching White sope etc from the Company of Merchantes Adventurers within the Citty of Bristol.

Wee whose names are heerevnto subscribed being of the Society of Merchant Adventurers of this Citty of Bristoll doe humbly certifie That wee haue been credibly informed from our Factories beyond seas, and doe thereupon verily beleive, That the Manufacture of woollen Cloath of this Kingdome is in very much disesteeme abroad of what it was heretofore for that of late yeeres It hath been most usually Mill'd and Tuckt (As wee are advised) with Soape made with Tallow and partly with Horsegrease or fatt or other Corrupte grease, The wooll thereof before its spineing, too, being most commonly seam'd (As Vulgarly called) with Piggs or Goosegrease or other Corrupt grease or Trayne oyle, and not with oyle ollive, which said grease can never be soe scoured out but that in hott weather and moyst, and when those Clothes are transported to hotter Countries then of this Climate, Moths and wormes doe and will breed therein. On which reason the like Manufacture of Holland is of greater Vallue and sells to greater

¹ Marginal note in a different hand from the extract.

² On 9 November, 1667, a Commons Committee had been set up to prepare a bill 'to regulate Abuses and Exactions in the Post Office'. *Journals of the House of Commons*, ix, 17. The postal rates had been fixed in 1660 and had not been officially increased, but the lease had changed hands at midsummer 1667, the salaries of postmasters had been reduced by half, and this may account for the trouble. See Howard Robinson, *The British Post Office*, Princeton, 1948, pp. 52-53.

Advantage in forraigne partes then the said manufacture of this Kingdome (They using oyle ollive in its spineing and makeing which is a preservative against said moths and wormes) and Castile soape or other Soape made with oyle ollive in its milling and Tucking, and not soape made of Tallow or of any other Kinde of grease, wherefore unlesse some tymely remedy and expedient be provided to the Contrary, either by a generall restraint of makeing said Soape, or of its vse and the vse of any kinde of grease in and about the makeing milling and Tucking of all Cloaths whatsoever, and alsoe of Serges too, there being some parity of reason for the one as well as the other, which wee humbly submitt to your prudence, the Staple of wooll of this nation wilbee of noe more vallue here by Consequence then the said Manufactures shalbee abroad, to the great prejudice dammage and dishonour *p. 67* of the Kingdome and the ruine of Commerce and the poore, And wee further humbly Certifie That by reason of the quantities of said white soape made with Tallow Horsegrease and such like Corrupt grease in the Counties adjacent, whereas there hath been heretofore neere 2000 Tonns of oyle ollive a yeare ymported into this Citty, there hath not been neere 500 Tonns of late heere yeerely ymported, And by Consequence it is the like in all other portes of this Kingdome tradeing for the same, whereby his Maiesties Customes are much lessened, both as to the exportacion of Merchandizes, the Manufacture of this Kingdome, the Proceedes whereof buyes the said oyles in retournes made home And alsoe as to the importacion of our said Commoditie.

Given under our Common Seale, As alsoe under our handes this 10th day of February in the 20th yeere of the Reigne of our Soueraigne Lord Charles the second of England etc, King defender of the Faith.

W^m Willett
Will Hasell
George Moody
Rob' Yeamans
Walter Tocknell *Master*
Henry Creswicke
Tho : Langton

John Willoughby
Walter Sandy
Robert Yate
John Knight
Tho : Moore
Gabriell Deane
William Lysons

Book of Charters II, 66, 67¹

¹ For other documents concerning this affair, including a certificate from the City and an enthusiastic testimonial from the Customs Officers in support of the Society, see *Book of Charters II*, 68, 70-84. Elsworth was told to proceed cautiously in his effort to get the desired Act 'for feare it be made too publique and by that meanes hinder the grannt' (Ibid. 83).

476. DEMAND FOR AN ALLOWANCE ON SUGAR

16 October 1671

Alsoe ordered that a letter¹ be sent to the Commissioners of the Customes in London to order the officers of this Port to make vs an allowance of a 5th parte for tare on sugars from Barbados etc and which at present is denied, and that a sollicitor be attending on them for their answers therevnto; which is agreed to be Mr John Sharpe of London who is to be gratified for his paines.

Hall Book II, 16

477. MEMBERS TO BE DEFENDED AT THE CHARGE OF THE SOCIETY

11 November 1672

Then ordered and agreed That if any member of this Society shall att any time hereafter be aggrieved or abused by any officer of the Custome house or by the searcher or his deputy² contrary to the lawe in any matter relating to his trade of a merchant within this port, Then vpon application of such member to the master for the time being an hall shalbe forthwith called and vpon prooffe made of such abuse an order shalbe imediately made to defend such member in his right att the chardges of the Hall.

Hall Book II, 34

478. PROTEST AGAINST A TAX PROPOSED BY THE CONSUL IN VENICE³

6 December 1672

Att this Court or hall voted That whereas wee are informed that Mr George Hayles his maiesties present consul at Venice is

¹ For the letter, see *Book of Charters II.* 105. Bristol complained that she was allowed only one-sixth for tare, and not one-fifth as the Londoners were. See also p. 251.

² For complaints against the Customs Officers about this time, see *Book of Charters II.* 100-101, 106.

³ There are a considerable number of references to this affair in the *Calendars of State Papers Venetian*. George Hayles, the consul at Venice, proposed that there should be various increases in duties on ships and goods coming to Venice in order that he should be given an increased salary commensurate with that of other consuls. He got some support, but was opposed by the Levant Company and the Venetian government whose agent in England secretly stirred up the opposition of the merchants. He persevered till 1675 when the government decided against him. See *Cal. S.P. Venetian*, 1671-2, pp. 286-7, 292-3, 302, 310, 315, 319, 321, 326, 327; *Ibid.* 1673-75, pp. 44-46, 82, 225, 364, 366, 375.

endeavouring to raise a new duty on our shipps and a tax of $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent' on our goods and merchandizes to the burthening of trade, It is voted and ordered that a petition be proferred by the Master and Wardens (in the name of the whole society) vnto his Maiestie to oppose the imposition of this intended tax, And the petition now agreed on is to be sent vpp too morrow night per post vnto Mr Benjamin Whetcombe merchant in London with a letter from the master and wardens Requesting him to present it accordingly;¹ and to alter the forme, if occasion be, and hee shalbee soe advised, and to promise him the reimbursement of his charges which the hall is to beare.

Hall Book II, 40

479. PETITION TO THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN

14 April 1674

That the master, wardens, Treasurer and Mr Yate shall attend Mr Maior and the Aldermen to desire them to permitt vs in their names to make application to the king and his counsell for the taking off the present impost on corne imported into this citty,² and the chardge hereof is to be borne out of the Hall stock.

Also the same time to speake with the maior and Aldermen about regulating the post office and to take such course for the preventing of the abuse of the late coming in of the post on the seuerall post daies as they shall thinke fitt and convenient.³

Hall Book II, 60

480. COMMITTEE OF GRIEVANCES

10 November 1674

voted that Mr William Willett thelder and Mr Gabriel Deane be added to the Committee for grievances appointed the 31th August last, and they are to endeavo^r the redresse of our greivances as to the consulage in Marseilles, the small allowance on corrupt wines, the overgauging of Brandy and strong waters, the abuses by the prisage masters and the searcher and all other our grievances whatsoever. And they or any five of them to meete on euery

¹ For the petition and letter, see *Book of Charters II*, 112, 113. The Society had been asked to petition 'by some eminent merchants of London'.

² The harvest of 1673 had been bad, there was a corn shortage, and the merchants wanted to import foreign corn duty-free.

³ For complaints from Bristol about delays in the post, see J. Wilson Hyde, *The Early History of the Post in Grant and Farm*, 1894, pp. 308-309.

Friday weekly att two oclock (in order hereunto) in every after noone of the same Friday weekly. And to begin Friday next.

Hall Book II, 78

481. TOBACCO LANDED IN IRELAND¹

25 February 1677

Memorandum Att this court or hall, the present masters and wardens, Mr Alderman Streamer, Mr Thomas Earle, Mr Walter Tocknell, Mr George Lane, John Knight Esq^r, Mr William Jackson, Mr William Hayman, Mr Gabriel Deane, Mr Samuel Hale, Mr Stephen Watts and Mr William Swymmer or any Five of them were voted and ordered to be a standing Committee for redressing all manner of greivances don to this society or any member hereof, and particularly touching the duty on tobacco exacted in Ireland and their preventing shipps from discharging tobacco there coming from his maiesties plantations in America. And they or any 5 of them are desired to take such course for the redressing of the same by law or else as they shall thinke fitt.

Hall Book II, 110

482. THE TARE OF BUTTER AND SUGAR

10 November 1680

Voted that the Comittee before named doe consider of and inspect into the abuses offered in the tare of butter and makeing the Caske with greene timber and to present it when fully considered of to the magistrates for our redress herein.²

Alsoe That Mr Mayo^r be desired (if hee goes to London) to endeavō^r with the Commissioners of the Customes to procure an allowance of a Fifth part for tare of English Plantacion sugers as tis in London and the Comittee above named are to give Mr Mayo^r instruccions in this business and the charges thereof are to be defrayed by the Hall.

Hall Book II, 167

¹ Plantation tobacco was being taken direct to Ireland in spite of the Navigation Acts. Bristol Merchants complained that this affected their trade adversely. They also complained that the new farmer of the Excise in Ireland was exacting from them 1d. a pound more than in the last twelve years. *Book of Charters II, 120.*

² For earlier complaints about butter casks and the City's orders that makers should put their marks on the casks, see Bristol Record Office: *Book of Ordinances and Acts*, 04273(2), fo. 53, 25 April, 1654.

483. DISPUTE CONCERNING THE SEARCHER'S FEES¹

10 November 1682

10 November 1682 The report this day made by the Committee appointed to inspect the searchers Fees is approved of by the whole Hall And it is now voted and ordered That the said Committee be continued. And that if any member of the society hath been or shalbe exacted on by the searcher such member shall apply himselfe to the same Committee And then what suite or course of lawe shall thereupon be by the said Committee or the Major part of them (with advice of one of our standing Counsellis) directed to be commenced shalbe prosecuted with effect att the charges of this Hall.

Hall Book II, 207

484. PETITION CONCERNING THE TARE ON SUGAR

29 November 1682

Vpon reading this Day at the Board the petition of Sir Richard Hart Knight, on behalfe of himselfe and other the Marchants of his Maiestyes Loyall City of Bristoll, praying that a fift part of all sugars (imported into Bristoll from any of his Maiestyes Forreigne Plantacions into this Kingdome) may be allowed to them for Tarre in like manner as the Marchants of London haue hitherto had, untill the Tare of sugars, which the sayd Marchants of London import shall be advanced to a sixth part, according to the opinion of the Commissioners of his Maiestyes Customes in that matter some time since, His Maiesty was pleased to order that this petition (a Copy whereof is hereunto annext) be and it is hereby referred to the Right Honourable the Lords Commissioners of his Maiestyes Treasury forthwith to take the same into Consideracion, and to doe therein as their Lordships shall thinke just and equitable.

Sir Richard
Hartes Petition
and other
Marchants of
Bristoll referred
to the Treasury.

P.R.O.; P.C. 2/69, p. 583

485. 4 June 1685

Memorandum that at this courte or hall it was voted and ordered that Sir Richard Hart and Sir John Knight be forthwith sent vpp to London on behalfe of this society (if it may be) to prevent the ympositions intended on Tobacco and sugars² And to take such methods as they thinke fitt thereabouts and the

¹ See p. 237, note 2.

² An Act for granting to His Majesty an Imposition upon all Tobacco and Sugar, etc. *Statutes at Large*, iii. 242-245.

chardges of their journey and of their sollicitations shalbe borne by this hall and Mr Treasurer is to supply them with such moneys from time to time as the master shall direct and order. And the said Sir Richard Hart and Sir John Knight to be authorized to this purpose by a instrument vnder our common seale.

Hall Book II, 263

486. OPPOSITION TO NEW TAX ON SUGAR AND TOBACCO

Bristoll 6th June 1685

Gentlemen¹

Wee crave leave to communicate to you the trouble wee find our City in upon the news of an additionall Tax upon sugars and Tobacco and humbly to offer our opinion therein foreseeing that it will be of great prejudice to the Trade of this kingdome, and our plantations abroad but particulerly its influence will greatly affect this place, the most of our Trade being now reduced to Virginia and the Islands, Being by the London Companies debarred from adventuring to the most profitable parts of the world, although by two Charters granted to our merchants hall by Queen Elizabeth and king Charles the first of Blessed memory wee are intituled to a Generall Trade. And now we make our applicacions to you our Representatives to use your utmost endeavo^{rs} to prevent passing That Bill and have ordered and intrusted Sir Richard Hart and Sir John Knight to attend you and speak our sentiments in this great concern which cannot be so fully done by Letter, not that wee would appear to interrupt or oppose the enlarging of his maiesties revenue. All loyall persons know that Government of itself is burthen enough without the addicion of want to make it more weighty. But if Trade must bear it, that it may be placed upon such commodities as the subject may pay it without regretts, his maiesties Officers collect it with greater ease, and the ballance of Trade kept steady with our neighbo^{rs} the French and Dutch whose Plantacions (if this Act pass) will mightily advance and ours as much decline. This is the Errant the above mencioned friend goes on, whome wee recommend to you and subscribe

Your affectionate servants

Giles Merrick	} sherriffs	W ^m Swymmer
James Twyford		George Hart
John Moore		Jo ⁿ Sandford

¹ The Bristol M.P.s.

Robert Dowding
John Olliffe
Jn^o Bradway
Scarborough Chapman
Rich^d Gibbons
Robert Brookehouse

Will Hayman Mayor
Joⁿ Lawford
Rob Yeamans
W^m Crabb
Joseph Creswick
William Clutterbuck

C.C.P., 1670-87, fo. 217¹

487. PETITION AGAINST DUTY ON MOLASSES

p. 490

7 December 1691

the Committee about Molosses mett 7th day of December 1691.

p' Mr William Swymmer
Mr Jacob Beele
p' Mr Robert Kirke
p' Mr John Cooke
Mr Henry Gibbs
Mr Edward Jones
Sir Thomas Earle

p' Mr William Jackson
p' Mr Robert Yate
Mr Thomas Scroope
p' Mr John Cary
Mr John Yeamans senior
p' Mr Charles Jones

or any 5 of them a Committee for procuring a parte of the East India trade to this Citty And to seeke redresse from Parliament about Molosses etc. Any other member if he pleaseth to be present. This Committee to meete twice a weeke and to call to their assistance any other traders or Merchants that will contribute their help.

They with diverse others as well members of this society as sugar bakers, distillers and tradesmen agreed on the following petition

To the Honorable the Knights, Citizens and Burgesses in Parliament assembled

The humble Petition of the Merchants and Planters trading to and interested in their Maiesties suger Plantations; alsoe the sugar Bakers and Distillers Inhabiting within the Citty of Bristoll.

Sheweth. That the product of the said Plantacions are laden with very heavy and greate duties which has already tended to the ruin of very many and lessining the growing trade thereof

¹ Action by Common Council followed close on a decision of the Merchants' Hall of 4 June, 1685.

and weakining the said Plantations and consequently the abateing of the Navigation of the nation.

That the last sessions of this present Parliament an act was passed which imposed a very high Duty on spirits drawn from Molosses above what was layd on spirits drawn from others Materialls.¹

p. 491 That the said act is interpreted to charge the said high duty not only on spirits made of Malosses imported in kind but on Molosses produced from sugar brought into England which has brought further and very greate dammage to the said Plantations and the product thereof as well to the great Trade of refininge suger which was carryed on in the nation and is now in greate measure ingrossed by the Dutch.

That the said act as is humbly Conceived has not answered the ends thereby niether in the encrease of the revenue nor in the greater consumption of Wast, for that it has manifestly checked the encrease of the growing expence of spirits if not much lessened the same as your Peticoners are ready to prove.

Wherefore Your Peticioners humbly pray that this Honourable House would be pleased to take the premisses into consideracione and that Your Peticioners may be heard to shew reasons to this Honourable House for the makeing of the said Duty on Malosses equal to spirits made from other materialls or otherwise to doe therein as to Your Wisdoms shall seem meete.

And Your Peticioners as in duty bound shall for your Honours ever pray etc.

Richard Lane Maior
John Cooke Master
W^m Donning

Robert Kirke
W^m Merrick
W^m Swymmer
John Cary cum multis aliis

This petition was left with Mr John Cary to be sent (inclosed in a letter in which he was desired to give an hint about package of butter)² vnto our Representatives in Parliament.

Hall Book II, 490, 491.

¹ An Act for the Encourageing the Distilling of Brandy and Spirits from Corn, *Statutes of the Realm*, vi, 236-238. The act was designed to encourage the making of brandy, aqua vita and spirits from malted corn. It placed very low duties on such spirits, as compared with the duties on spirits made from foreign or imported materials.

² For difficulties about unsatisfactory butter casks, see p. 250, no. 482.

488. DISPUTE WITH THE SEARCHER¹Committees
revived

10 November 1692

The former Committees are revived and continued and the master and wardens elect to make search in our chests for the Records relating to the searcher and custome house officers and particularly the agreement in 1624 And to transmitt to our Representatives in parliament the same and such copies of letteres and other papers as they thinke fitt in order to our defence in that affaire And all or any of the members to assist herein.

*Hall Book II, 511*489. PETITION AGAINST THE SHIPPING OF TOBACCO DIRECT TO SCOTLAND AND IRELAND, 1694²

To the Honourable the Commons of England assembled in Parliament.

The Humble Peticion of the Merchants and Traders of the City of Bristol to their Maiesties Plantacions in America

Sheweth

That whereas by an Act made in the 22th and 23th of Charles the Second to prevent the Planting of Tobacco in England and regulateing the plantacion trade, It is enacted That any shipp or vessell that shall Load any comodities of the English Plantacions, That the said comodities shall by the said shipp or vessell be brought to some Port of England or Wales or the towne of Berwick vpon Tweed and shall be there vnladen and putt on shoare, the danger of the seas excepted. Notwithstanding which good Law grounded on many weighty reasons in the said Act mencioned

¹ There were continual disputes between the merchants and the searcher in the seventeenth century over the question of fees. The searcher kept a deputy at Pill and at Kingroad to search all vessels after they had cleared the Customs in Bristol, and acted as a check on the Customs officials. In the Merchants' Records, in a box labelled 'Bristol Dock Act, 1766', there are a number of documents concerning this particular dispute. These include a little packet containing papers dealing with earlier disputes, and a large number of depositions of witnesses on both sides taken by a commission issued out of the Exchequer in 1691. A settlement was not reached till April 1695 (*Hall Book III*, 35). J. Latimer, *Merchant Venturers*, p. 122, gives some details, but states erroneously that the Revolution doubtless brought the long conflict to an end.

² For this petition and the bill that was subsequently brought in, see *Journals of the House of Commons*, xi. 188, 195, 252, 255-6, 258, 265, 276, 277. The petition was presented on 17 December, 1694. The bill was read a second time on 20 March, 1695, and a motion to commit it was then defeated. The petition is one illustration of the numerous complaints made by English merchants in the seventeenth century against the evasion of the navigation acts by shipping of tobacco direct to Scotland and Ireland.

diuerse shippes belonging to England, Scotland and Ireland as alsoe to New England have for seuerall yeeres last past carryed the products of the plantacions in America directly to Scotland and Ireland without vnloding the same in England, Wales or the Towne of Berwick vpon Tweed or paying Custome for the same as by Law they ought, as your Peticoners are ready to prove, Which Practice being highly prejudiciall to their Maesties revenue and the Trade of this Kingdome, Your Peticioners therefore humbly pray this Honourable house to provide some remedy against this groweing Evell by such methods as in your greate Wisdomes shall be thought most fitt.

And your Peticioners as in duty bound shall ever pray etc.

Hall Book III, 26

490. THANKS TO M.P.S. REQUEST FOR FURTHER HELP

7 March 1695

committee to
write thankes
to our
members
in Parliament

The master, wardens, Mr Treasurer, Mr Tocknell, Mr Yeamans senior, Mr Mason be Committee to write our thankes to our members in Parliament for their care and paines in carrying on a bill for securing the plantation trade,¹ and the necessary chardges in this buisness to be borne by the Hall, and to meete on Saturday morning next by ten oclock att the Tolzey.

Hall Book III, 28

491. Sirs

p. 31 Att our Hall held the seaventh instant it was vnanimously voted that their hearty thankes should be presented you for the greate services you have don our society and particulerly in carrying on the bill (now on foote) for secureing the plantacion trade etc. And withall wee are desired to assure you what expences you have
p. 32 been and shalbe at in that or any other affaire in relation to vs shalbe readily and gratefully reimbursed. Likewise it is farther requested That if it lyes in your way to releave vs in all or any of the inclosed particulers, you would not be wanting; and in soe doing you will farther oblige

Your humble Servants

Bristoll 9^o March 1694

Samuell Price Master

Richard Crumpe

John Swymmer } Wardens

To Sir Richard Hart and
Sir John Knight etc.

1) That Bisquitt, bread, pease, beanes, oates, oatemeale and

¹ See no. 489.

grutts¹ may be shipt off free as other provisions are, and its reasonable to allow the same debenter² on bisquett as on wheate, since 10 Bushells made into bread and exported is of more benefitt to the Kingdome than 100 shipt off in graine (viz³) it imployes the poore, consumption of wood, and is generally exported in cask or Baggs and when bread is cheap wilbe caryed to all places.

2) That no Fees be paid when the King receaves noe duty.

3) That in case an Equivalent be given for the tunnage Act, if possible to lower the duty on Calamint.³

4) To endeavour that goods not rated in the booke of rates and now pay ad valorem may be rated,⁴ an oath being required for all small thinges at Customehouse which hinders the export of what would be Shipt off.

Hall Book III, 31, 32

492. COMMITTEE TO RECEIVE PROPOSALS FOR THE BENEFIT OF TRADE

19 July 1695

Voted and agreed that the master, Mr warden Swymmer, Sir William Hayman, Mr Robert Yate, Mr William Swymmer, Mr Arthur Hart and Mr Edward Tocknell⁵ or any four of them be a Committee to meete at our Hall or some other convenient place, as the Tolzey or else, to receive any proposalls that may be offerd for the benefitt of trade, and to report the same from time to time at the next Hall on euery Thursday morning weekly.

Comittee to
meete euery
Thursday
morning.

Hall Book III, 38

493. 14 January 1696

voted that the master, warden Hollidge, Sir John Knight, Sir Richard Crumpe, Mr John Cary, Mr George Mason, Mr Treasurer, Mr Charles Jones, Mr Arthur Hart, Mr Edward Tocknell and Sir John Duddlestone or any five of them be a Committee to consult matters in relation to the benefitt of trade, and to meet in our hall too morrow at 3 oclock and then meete as often as they please to receive proposalls and report them to the Hall. And any member of the society that pleases may be present.

committee for
trade to meete
toomorrow

Hall Book III, 59

¹ ? groats.

² Debenture. *A certificate to the exporter of produce on which a bounty is granted.*

³ Presumably calamine or zinc ore is meant here and not calamint which was a herb used in medicine.

⁴ On goods not specified by name in the Customs list, duty was charged at so much in the pound on their value.

⁵ Followed by *be a Com^{tee}* struck through.

494. APPOINTMENT OF A REPRESENTATIVE

Wednesday 13^o January 1695 the Committee for trade

p' Mr Samuel Price

Mr William Swymmer

p' Mr James Hollidge

p' Mr Charles Jones

Sir John Knight

p' Mr Arthur Hart

p' Sir Richard Crumpe

p' Mr Edward Tocknell and

p' Mr John Cary

p' Sir John Duddlestone

p^s Mr George Mason

They mett and their opinion was That the Master be desired speedily to call a Hall.

And that said Hall doe forthwith choose a person that is one of the members of the Hall And to impower him that shalbe soe made choise of to sollicit any matters or thinges that shall from time to time be recommended to him from the Hall And perticulerly the obtaineing a bill to be passed into an Act for the better secureing the plantacion trade¹ and procureing convoy for our shippes from Virginia and that said person be satisfied for his trouble and charges in the execucion thereof.

Hall Book III, 60

495. 17 January 1695

Mr Cary to be
sent upp

to be
corresponded
with

supplied with
money not
exceeding 100^{li}

Alsoe voted that Mr John Cary² (a member of this Hall) be sent upp pursuant to the Report of the aforesaid comittee And the same comittee is to correspond with him and send him vpp instructions from time to time as they and such members of the society as please to ioyn with them shall think fitt and to supply him with moneys as they see occasion soe as the whole exceeds not one hundred pounds without the consent of the whole Hall. And that the said Mr Cary be recommended to our Representatives in Parliament as our commissioner.

Hall Book III, 62

496. M.P. REQUESTED TO HELP THE SOCIETY'S REPRESENTATIVE

Merchants Hall Bristol the 21^o January 1695.

Sir

Att a meeting of the Merchants Hall the 17th instant It was voted that a member of the society should be desired to goe for

¹ See p. 255, no. 489.

² See p. 48 note 4. A number of papers referring to John Cary's work as representative of the Society can be found in the British Museum. See Letters and Papers of John Cary, *Additional Manuscript* 5540.

London in¹ order to sollicite such affaires relateing to trade as the Hall should recommend to him, and Captain John Cary was prevailed with to undertake this imployment. A Committee was likewise appointed to Correspond with him. Wee have desired him to apply himselfe to Sir Thomas Day and you as occasion offers and doe request you will please to give him your assistance not only in what relates to Parliamentary affaires, But alsoe to the Admiralty and other offices where wee are assured your countenance will procure him easie access and facillitate his negotiation. Wee have desired him particulerly to waite on you And consult with you on some heads which wee thinke very necessary to be inserted in the bill for better secureing the plantacion trade Which with our humble services presented unto you Is the present needfull from

Your obliged humble servants

Superscribed. To Major
Robert Yate A member of
the Honourable house of
Commons
London

Samuel Price Master
James Holledge Warden
William Swymmer Treasurer
Richd : Crumpe
Arthur Hart
Richard Lane
Charles Jones
Geo : Mason

Hall Book III, 63

497. INSTRUCTIONS TO THE REPRESENTATIVE

Att the merchants Hall Bristoll
the 21^o January 1695.

Captain John Cary
Sir

You will see by the annexed votes at the severall meetings of the Merchants Hall that you are appointed to goe for London to sollicite such affaires in the behalfe of the Hall as shalbe recommended to you by us who are alsoe to furnish you with money. Our desire is that you will please to sett forwards on your journey with all the speed you cann and on your arrivall at London to Address your selfe to our members in Parliament. And to lay before them the greate advantage which will arise not only to this city but to the whole Kingdome in generall by passing the plantacion Act² which wee desire you to use your vtmost endeavours

¹ Followed by *in* struck through.

² See p. 255.

260 MERCHANT VENTURERS OF BRISTOL

to get don this sessions. Wee alsoe desire you to make application to the Admiralty for a good convoy to secure our Virginia shippes home into this Channell, wherein wee doubt not our said Members will give all the assistance they can, with whome wee desire you to consult about all thinges that concerne the interest of this City. Wee now order the Treasurer to furnish you with fifty pounds which wee hope you will manage with frugality, And as wee find you shall have further occasions shall take due care to supply you. As for other matters you may expect to heare from time to time as occasion offers. Interim wishing you a good Journey and desireing to heare frequently from you

wee remaine

Your assured freinds and servants

Sam. ^{ll} Price Master	Arthur Hart
Ja : Hollidge Warden	Rich ^d Lane
W ^m Swymmèr Treasurer	Charles Jones
Rich ^d Crumpe	Geo. Mason

Hall Book III, 64

498. PETITION AGAINST PROPOSED DUTY ON SUGAR

17 May 1698

Committee to
petition
Parliament to
prevent
imposicion on
sugars

Memorandum That at this Court or hall it was voted That the Master, Wardens, Mr Henry Gibbes, Mr Jacob Beel, Mr John Cary, Mr John Yeamans junior, Mr James Hollidge, Mr Francis Rogers and Mr Anthony Swymmèr be a Comittee to draw a petition to the house of Commons in Parliament to prevent the intended imposition on sugars.

Hall Book III, 122

APPENDIX A

MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY WHOSE ADMISSIONS ARE RECORDED IN THE HALL BOOK BUT WHOSE NAMES DO NOT APPEAR IN THE REGISTER

From 1639 onwards the *Hall Books* can be used to check the accuracy of the Register of Members. The following members whose admission is recorded in the *Hall Books* do not appear in the Register.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Date of Admission</i>	<i>Reference</i>
James Croft(e)	20 April 1639	<i>Hall Book I, 5</i>
Thomas Gay	20 April 1639	<i>Hall Book I, 5</i>
John Scholer (Schooler)	20 April 1639	<i>Hall Book I, 5</i>
William Hickes (Hixe)	20 April 1639	<i>Hall Book I, 5</i>
Jasper Wall	31 May 1639	<i>Hall Book I, 6</i>
Samuel Farmer	31 May 1639	<i>Hall Book I, 6</i>
William Berkin	31 May 1639	<i>Hall Book I, 6</i>
Richard Long the younger	15 July 1639	<i>Hall Book I, 6</i>
Michael Hunt	22 July 1639	<i>Hall Book I, 7</i>
Thomas Griffith	22 July 1639	<i>Hall Book I, 7</i>
Job Willoughby	22 July 1639	<i>Hall Book I, 7</i>
William Bevan	14 August 1639	<i>Hall Book I, 10</i>
John Long	14 August 1639	<i>Hall Book I, 10</i>
Henry Creswick	14 August 1639	<i>Hall Book I, 10</i>
John Baugh	14 August 1639	<i>Hall Book I, 10</i>
Matthew Cann	14 August 1639	<i>Hall Book I, 10</i>
John Locke	20 September 1639	<i>Hall Book I, 13</i>
Francis Painter	20 September 1639	<i>Hall Book I, 13</i>
John Scott	20 September 1639	<i>Hall Book I, 13</i>
Thomas Hayman	20 September 1639	<i>Hall Book I, 13</i>
Stephen Keech	20 September 1639	<i>Hall Book I, 13</i>
Francis Clark	20 September 1639	<i>Hall Book I, 13</i>
Thomas Wall	28 July 1640	<i>Hall Book I, 26</i>
William Yeamans	3 December 1646	<i>Hall Book I, 91</i>
Major General Skippon	17 January 1651	<i>Hall Book I, 189</i>
Major General Harrison	17 January 1651	<i>Hall Book I, 189</i>

APPENDIX B

SHIPS ARRIVING AT THE PORT OF BRISTOL

(Based on the Wharfage Books)

FROM	Sept. 1658 -Sept. 1659 No. of ships	Sept. 1659 -Sept. 1660 No. of ships	Sept. 1683 -Sept. 1684 No. of ships	Sept. 1684 -Sept. 1685 No. of ships	Sept. 1685 -Sept. 1686 No. of ships
AMERICA AND THE WEST INDIES					
Antigua ..	—	—	2	4	5
Barbados ..	11	10	14	12	11
Jamaica ..	—	—	13	9	15
Maryland ..	—	—	2	5	1
Montserrat ..	—	—	3	2	—
Nevis ..	6	5	7	14	11
New England	—	2	—	—	—
Pennsylvania	—	—	—	1	—
St. Antonia ..	—	—	2	1	1
St. Christophers	—	—	4	—	—
Virginia ..	10	14	16	12	26
Total ..	27	31	63	60	70
IRELAND					
Port not stated	51	51	—	—	—
Belfast ..	—	—	3	—	3
Cork ..	10	8	11	12	11
Dublin ..	10	16	3	9	6
Londonderry ..	—	2	2	6	7
Kinsale ..	3	2	3	2	1
Sligo ..	—	—	3	3	1
Waterford ..	4	9	5	5	7
Wexford ..	3	1	15	10	11
Youghall ..	2	3	4	3	4
Other ports .. (including Coleraine, Duntanaghy, Dingle, Dun- garvan, Ross, Wicklow)	—	—	3	3	7
Total ..	83	92	52	53	58

FROM	Sept. 1658 -Sept. 1659 No. of ships	Sept. 1659 -Sept. 1660 No. of ships	Sept. 1683 -Sept. 1684 No. of ships	Sept. 1684 -Sept. 1685 No. of ships	Sept. 1685 -Sept. 1686 No. of ships
FRANCE					
Bordeaux ..	6	4	—	1	17
Croisic ..	—	—	—	5	7
Marseilles ..	3	1	—	—	—
Morlaix ..	—	—	—	2	7
Rochelle ..	10	12	—	1	8
St. Malo ..	1	3	—	1	7
St. Martins ..	—	—	—	3	4
Port not stated	13	28	—	1	1
Other ports .. (Bayonne, Brest, Quimper)	—	—	—	1	6
Total ..	33	48	—	15	57
SPAIN					
Alicante ..	—	—	1	—	2
Bilbao ..	1	—	12	6	8
Cales ..	4	2	7	10	5
Malaga ..	2	3	8	8	7
Other ports ..	—	—	3	3	3
Total ..	7	5	31	27	25
PORTUGAL					
Lisbon ..	5	4	3	2	—
Oporto ..	—	—	56	35	9
Other ports ..	1	1	2	1	2
Total ..	6	5	61	38	11
UNITED PROVINCES					
Amsterdam ..	—	1	—	1	—
Rotterdam ..	—	—	21	17	15
Other ports ...	2	—	—	—	2
Total ..	2	1	21	18	17

FROM	Sept. 1658 -Sept. 1659 No. of ships	Sept. 1659 -Sept. 1660 No. of ships	Sept. 1683 -Sept. 1684 No. of ships	Sept. 1684 -Sept. 1685 No. of ships	Sept. 1685 -Sept. 1686 No. of ships
SCANDINAVIA AND NORTHERN EUROPE					
Denmark ..	—	—	2	—	—
Hamburg ..	5	5	1	1	2
Norway ..	2	5	5	6	5
Riga ..	—	—	2	3	1
Sweden ..	—	—	1	1	2
Total ..	7	10	11	11	10
OTHER PLACES					
Italy ..	—	—	—	3	—
Madeira ..	2	1	—	—	—
Newfoundland	2	—	2	3	—
Scotland ..	1	1	2	3	2
Zante ..	1	1	2	1	—
Miscellaneous and ports not named ..	3	18	9	11	17
Total ..	9	21	15	21	19
TOTAL SHIPPING	174	213	254	243	267

Note: The figures for 1658/9 and 1659/60 are abstracted from the Wharfage accounts for those years. The figures for 1683/4, 1684/5 and 1685/6 are based on the lists of ships paying anchorage found in the Wharfage Books. Only a few of the wharfage accounts give full details of the ports from which the ships came, and anchorage lists are found only for the three years given in the above table.

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